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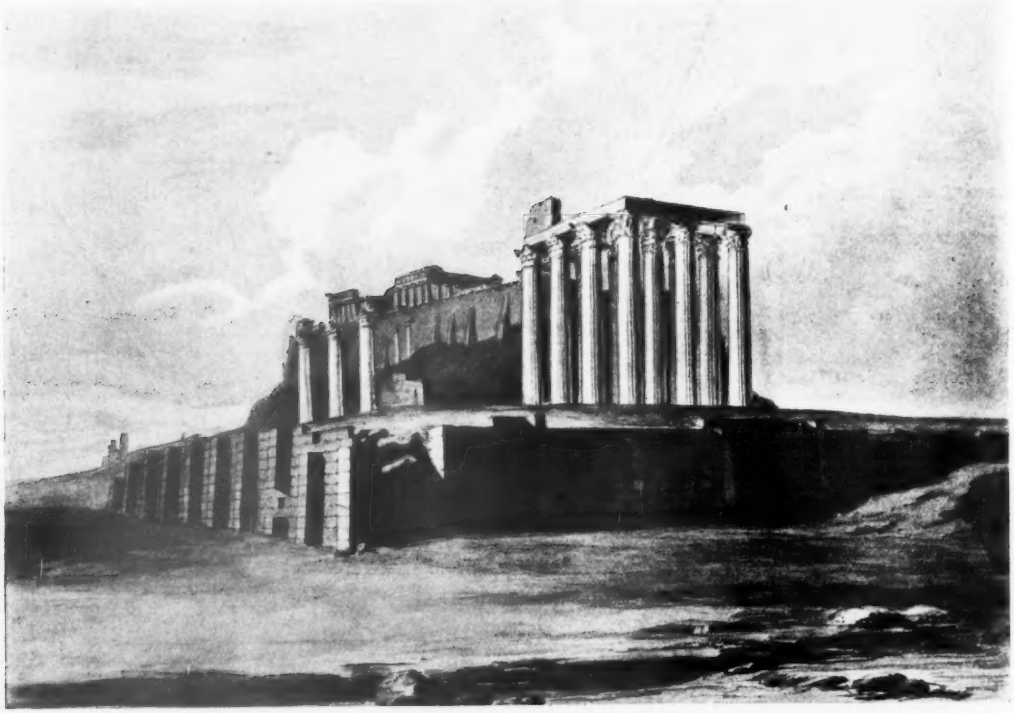
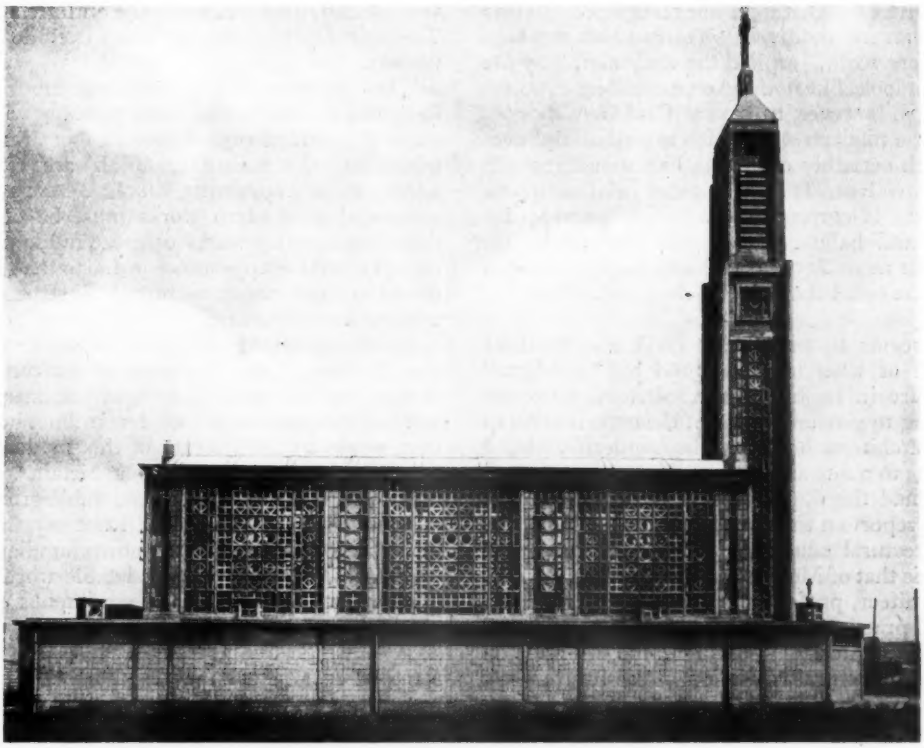


TEMPLE OF JUPITER, ATHENS
From a Water-colour Drawing by Sir Robert Smirke, R.A.

R.I.B.A. Collection



CHURCH OF SAINTE THÉRÈSE AT MONTMAGNY :
Side elevation showing the blank walls to the aisles, and the main lighting by clerestory windows with concrete tracery.
By the Brothers Perret

# Modern French Architecture

BY HOWARD ROBERTSON [*F.*], S.A.D.G.

[*A Paper read before the Royal Institute of British Architects on Monday* 14 *March* 1927.]

THE title of my paper at once brings me face to face with the unfortunate word "modern." Some people are thrilled by the very sound of this word, but to others it only suggests a term of opprobrium. I am reminded of an article by Paul Géraldy on the Paris Exhibition, in which he describes the absurdities of past exhibitions, the bedrooms which forbade sleep, and the dining rooms which took away one's appetite, all the trivial and terrible things which were grouped under the heading of " modern movement." " And so," says Géraldy, " the word *modern*, even for those who are most favourably disposed towards the idea for which it stands, has gained such an evil reputation that artists are asking for a new label." " Perhaps," he goes on, " they are right in doing so. Not long ago, one of my friends was asked to act as member of an exhibition jury, to which only *modern* works were to be admitted, and found to his surprise that exhibits were being accepted or rejected absolutely without method or principle. Finally, in despair, he enquired of the chairman of

the committee by what signs one recognised whether a work of art was modern. " You can always recognise modern work," replied the chairman, " by the fact that it looks like nothing on earth."

There is, however, to-day, as Paul Géraldy goes on to say, a modern style which is well disciplined, and which certainly does look like something. It reflects ourselves. It is in no sense inimical to our traditions. It corresponds with our present-day customs and habits. It satisfies our needs. It reflects our mentality and our culture. It is modern in the same sense that we ourselves are modern : it is alive.

That seems to be a very vivid and truthful definition of what is understood by " modern " architecture in its best sense. Before, however, attempting to give an outline of the contribution of French architects towards the modern style, I would like to quote another opinion, one which we have all had the opportunity of absorbing in the Institute report on the 1924 International Congress on architectural education. The contribution in question is that of Monsieur Léon Jaussely, government architect, professor at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and practitioner of talent, on whom devolved the stimulating task of speaking at the Congress on French architectural education in the future.

" Whatever opinion we may hold of the present evolution of architecture," says Monsieur Jaussely, " it is undeniable that this evolution does exist, and that we are at present witnessing conscious or unconscious attempts to renew architectural forms and æsthetics. This renewal is more particularly noticeable in important buildings—large stores, bridges, churches, banks, cinemas, railway stations, airship sheds, etc., which we can consider as the expression of the monumental architecture of our time, and which logically should be compared with that of other epochs in order to understand the meanings of this architectural transformation." Mr. Jaussely then passes on to the question of the new æsthetics, " in which horizontal lines predominate, curves are more and more avoided, contrast between vertical and horizontal is universal. These new æsthetics are further characterised by the simplification of the articulation and its reduction to a small number of elements, the search for enveloping form, and general colour in place of detailed moulding ; points of decoration are sought for their contrast value, but are sparsely distributed and stand out against a bare background ; the appreciation of volume and masses is exact, the outlines are severe. The sobriety of these æsthetics exclude all mannerism.

" Let us recapitulate : simple composition and lines, of a real and severe classicism, but with different and reversed proportions ; sober architectural treatment, the facing materials are rich, even precious—or appearing such. . . . Particularly successful as modern works must be considered these engineering works of great frankness where the very striking appearance is due to the effect produced by combinations of purely constructive forms without any ornament."

By this admirable summary of modern tendencies, Monsieur Jaussely has saved me from the task of defining the characteristics of the latest French work of the modern school, but it must be realised that, while an architecture of this modern type is being evolved in France by a certain section of architects, there is also a considerable group which has not departed from, I will not say the classic tradition, but from what is known familiarly as the " pompier." It is an untranslatable word, but applied to architecture it implies pompous commonplaces, a complete absence of original thought, façades which are not so much designed as assembled out of stock familiar motives. It is architecture in which the designer originates only the framework of his building, and for his surface dressing draws upon a recognised vocabulary of approved elements. The façades of the Grand Palais in the Champs Elysées, whatever fine qualities they may have, provide an excellent example of the " pompier." Even the Petit Palais, in certain aspects, is the product of the academic formula.

As a point of departure from which to consider modern French architecture, I would like to go back fifty years, and illustrate a building which to my mind embodies to an extraordinary degree the virtues and vices which have been peculiar to French architecture, and for both of which the tradition of teaching at the French National School has been very largely responsible. That building is the Paris Opéra House, by Charles Garnier, completed in 1875.

The Opéra house is a striking example of the working of a marvellously efficient architectural formula, the formula of fine plan production, one which has been handed down from generation to generation of French teaching. More than any other nation has France inherited the planning

genius of Imperial Rome. The lavish spaces, the elegant and stately balance of ordered rhythm, the grandiose sequences and climaxes of Roman planning, are all exemplified in Garnier's plan. The Opéra house plan heralds, however, the beginnings of a war between the old-fashioned plan forms of solid masses and the lighter shapes which would logically result from modern methods of construction.

The apparent solidity of the plan points of the Opéra is in some cases the result of building out to achieve effects which would be more legitimate in a building of mass materials. The plan represents not so much an effort to express the modern resources of construction utilised in the Opéra, as the desire to apply them to preconceived forms. The resultant elevational architecture, produced in faithful obedience to the formulæ for composition in the grand manner, is nevertheless devoid of real vitality. It achieves the limit of what can be produced by sheer technique, both in method of organising plan form and in the production of elevational character, by the sheer dogged application of the rules of logic. It is an imitative architecture, using forms which were interesting and significant in their original time and purpose ; everything in this building spells arrangement, but not everything spells design. I have called the Opéra a masterpiece. It is perhaps rather a tour de force. It is also a veritable dictionary of decorative motifs and nearly all of them are bad !

I have dwelt at length on the Opéra, because it is a building which reached a high-water mark in a type of design against which a certain section of the younger generation of Frenchman has revolted. Its superb but rather empty eloquence raises the question whether this sort of architectural expression holds any real promise for the future. Let me quote from that most interesting publication of the French modernists " l'esprit Nouveau."

" It (the Opéra) is an external architecture. It can only herald decadence. . . . That is why the younger generation has categorically rejected the legacy of Garnier. Architecture is organically constructed from the inside outwards, and this does not apply only to its solids, but to its spirit. There is nothing to inherit from Garnier : one acknowledges the enormous effort of this man, an admiration which is not far removed from the distrust which one instinctively has of a magician. . . . On the whole, one may say that the Gothic movement was healthy and reassuring. But the Garnier phase represents a kind of funereal pomp. The undertaker . . . flowers . . . visits to the cemetery. A period which for us is quite dead. And yet, in itself, the auditorium of the Opéra is superb."

Here is a criticism and a tribute. It is one which could apply with variants to many buildings which, since the Opéra was built, are typical of the earnest endeavour to modify and adapt the old solid architecture of the grand manner to the innovations of modern steel construction.

As long ago as 1860 Viollet le Duc was prophesying the advent of a new architecture dominated by steel and iron, and Labrouste was applying the new methods to the Library of Sainte-Geneviève, and to the reading room in the Bibliothèque Nationale. But it was not till about 1878 that there was evident a kind of definite reaction against the traditional academic architecture leading to an outcrop of engineering structures such as the Galérie des Machines, no longer extant, and later to the Eiffel Tower, which suggested the possibilities of a modern architectural renaissance based on the sudden removal of those structural limitations out of which the old solid forms of building had largely arisen. It has taken a long time for the accepted architectural systems of proportion and expression to adapt themselves to this new freedom, and at the present time we can only point to portents and promises of an architecture which would be both logical and beautiful. The earlier efforts in France, as elsewhere, are full of compromises. The Grand Palais is competent, but it is a hybrid. So also is the Gare d'Orsay, a building which depends on steel but which parades an immense ponderous façade belying the airy grace of the metal vaults within. In the same category is the Pont Alexandre, built for the 1900 exhibition, an engineering structure decorated by architects. All these have merits, but can lay no claim to indicating a solution.

More interesting and sincere, but marred by the triviality of its detail, is the Magasin de la Samaritaine, where the steel skeleton receives a frank adornment. Here the mistake lies in the emphasis of the detail of structure rather than in the expression of its spirit. It is graceful strength of form that one hopes to see expressed, rather than the bones and vertebræ, however skilfully adorned.

At this stage in the modern French movement begin the experiments and heart-searchings which are still the order of the day for the many who refuse

the solace of complacency. We find various lines of approaching the difficult problem of a modern architectural expression, the two main alternatives being, first, the expression of the modern construction and materials, and, secondly, a more abstract implication and suggestion of modern purpose, not so much through direct expression as by character of form and that general atmosphere to which detail and decoration so largely contribute.

In the first category are buildings such as the annexes of the Crédit Lyonnais in Paris, a design which attempts to show deference to the old and new alike. It accomplishes this by carrying a heavy classic cornice across arches and spandrils of apparent steel. It is a pleasant-mannered design, but the attempts at structural expression appear to be misdirected and somewhat puerile.

Other interpretations found an outlet in the use of tiles and strangely coloured bricks. The streets of Paris are fairly rich in modernity of this type.

Of the second category, that of the abstract expression of modern function and construction, it is more difficult to speak, for we find ourselves obliged to recognise the unpleasant truth that within the past thirty or forty years France has been guilty of much architectural turpitude from which she is only just recovering. Pictures tell the story better than words. We have at first the smartened and refurbished versions of tradition. On the whole Louis XVI has proved easiest to handle, and the French stone is temptingly easy to carve. Then we have some terribly misunderstood versions of a new Austro-German style, said to be modern and amusing. Internally, however, one could always play fresh variations on the old classic fiddle, and the influence of Garnier has been slow to die.

This is a period in which architectural disasters happened in every country, but the French, who are logical and thorough, enjoyed disasters to the full.

Inevitably, however, came reaction, and with it a better spirit in the handling of the classic theme as applied to modern buildings and a disappearance of the more violent forms of anarchy. The art nouveau and the classic developed side by side and sometimes mingled ; very often the result was good, but occasionally street architecture was startled by buildings of competent and almost ferocious ugliness.

While French modern architecture, up to the period of the war, was sowing its wild oats, there was nevertheless much work of a sober and yet interesting type, modern in its recognition of requirements, and yet paying respect to civic tradition, exemplified more particularly in smaller buildings and in detail designs which suggest the possibilities which we are to-day beginning to explore more fully.

It is this work which forms the closest link between the French modern tendencies of the pre-war era, and the ultra-modern movement which has gained a considerable hold over French architecture during the past few years.

Before the war the ground was already prepared for change, based on what we may call the revolt against the Garnier tradition. But the alternatives were unsatisfying. Architects toyed with the expression of structure, they timidly faced the possibilities of steel and concrete, and they made a few concessions to a better expression of external form; but at heart they were still slaves of the past and its teachers.

The war, with all its evil, has clarified certain issues. It has led to independent thought, to a distrust of perpetual compromise, to a questioning of everything, including the authority of architectural traditions.

Before the war experiment was going on, originators were at work. But since the war, greater recognition has been accorded to the pioneers, and more designers have joined their ranks.

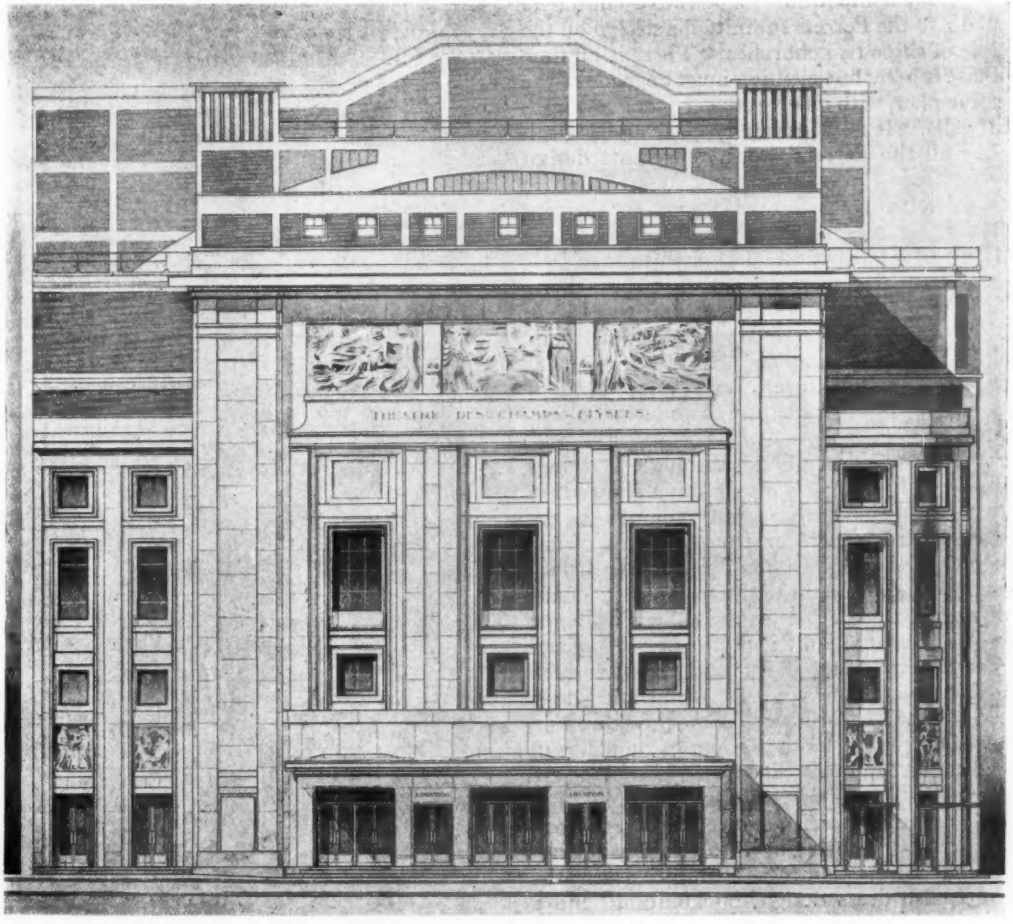
Real pioneers are rare, and there are few in France who have made a definite contribution to architectural progress, who have furthered design in the same sense as did the mediæval builders with their stone ribbed vaults. Amongst the small and distinguished band who will ultimately be entitled to claim a niche in modern architectural history I would like particularly to mention the brothers Perret. Their work constitutes, in my opinion, probably the most important individual step in modern development of the past fifty years, not so much from the standpoint of buildings erected as from that of experiment and inspiration.

The Perrets, architects and builders both, trained in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and in the school of a varied practice, are doubly qualified ; but in addition they have the precious gift of imagination, and are applying it to the study of the most significant of building materials, reinforced concrete.

The Perrets' theories are quite clear. They understand the material, its possibilities, and its limitations. They see the future of reinforced

concrete, not as massive precast blocks or in heavy plastic shapes, but as structural posts and ribs, placed, like Gothic piers, at the point of load, and, like them, permitting the lightest screens or infillings between them.

But the best contribution of the Perrets are their churches at Le Raincy and Montmagny, and the observation tower which they have built at Grenoble, all in concrete and tremendously expressive. The Le Raincy church shows the concrete exposed.



THE CHAMPS ELYSÉES THEATRE, PARIS
A. and G. Perret, Architects

This is the system of their earliest best known work, the Champs Elysées theatre, the plan of which is so expressive of a modern light construction. Expressive too is the façade with its application of marble slabs, a veneer construction both legitimate and honest. And here too is true sculpture applied to architecture in the three great panels of Bourdelle. To leave it raw from the forms is perhaps not the ultimate expression, but architecture of this frank type is a vital step. The great cast geometric windows are a wonderful decorative contribution, and the Perrets have succeeded, too, in showing fresh broad possibilities in stained glass. At Montmagny the same moulds were used as at Le Raincy

—a question of economy. The exterior is more difficult to appreciate. The structure is expressive, but details such as those of the tower are somewhat mean, and a certain poverty and lack of finish is in evidence. The inspiration is very similar to that of Le Raincy.

In a recent competition for a votive church to Jeanne d'Arc the Perrets submitted a design on the principle of these two churches. There is no time to criticise it here, but mention must be made of the expressive plan, with its great tower piers and light screen walls. It is wonderfully clear and logical, and, like all the Perrets' work, represents design well organised.

I have dwelt at length on the Perrets, for they are outstanding figures, one of the few firms which have something *vital* to say in modern architecture.

The Perrets designed the theatre at the Paris Exhibition with the triple stages which were never used. We have now arrived at mention of this exhibition, already so familiar. Its importance was not in the main architectural ; temporary buildings, unless true to their very nature, cannot make serious contribution to progress in permanent building, either in construction or expression, two things which are really one. The exhibition showed, in architecture, a general desire first to emphasise the geometrical solids which constitute building forms, and then decorate them with an appropriate surface treatment. It showed the desire to explore modern technique in materials. It expressed itself in wide openings and spans, light and effortless construction, cantilevering and even suspension, and, in detail, in the craftsmanship of metal and glass. Those who, like Le Corbusier, blame the exhibition for neglecting the more serious problems of standardisation and the economic dwelling are scarcely just. It was an exhibition of applied decoration, and one which achieved the very considerable results of bringing into relationship not only architecture, painting, sculpture, and the crafts, but also dress design, bookbinding, and a hundred minor activities. Whatever the critics may say, it was a display of vitality.

The exhibition was only a demonstration to mark a stage in the modern forward movement. The impress of Munich or Austria, or the Orient, or Paul Poiret, do not affect the main issue, the fact that the modern movement was already in being long before the exhibition and in some form or other will most certainly continue, for this modern movement has a background of over three thousand years.

In France, as elsewhere, the exhibition has had the

THE OBSERVATION TOWER AT GRENOBLE
By the Brothers Perret

effect of popularising modern design and in stimulating craftsmen. The glass, the metal work, the lighting, are points which are receiving a modern expression. Very modern, too, and also particularly French, is the suggestion of character and

A Coiffeur's Shop in the Boulevard des Capucines
Azéma, Edrei and Hardy, architects

atmosphere. A French scent shop suggests the very essence of luxurious and heady perfume. The toy shop offers you an almost intellectual abstraction of fun.

French modern craftsmanship continues its pre-war achievements. It is also discovering fresh possibilities, such as the handling of glass in a bold and monumental fashion, with Réné Lalique as chief contributor.

In monumental buildings, there has certainly been a dearth of opportunity, but in commercial work the modern spirit has several triumphs to its credit. The new annex to the Bon Marché has that suave beauty of plan form which, in new work as well as old, seems instinctive with the French. Its exterior is both sensible and dignified, and charmingly detailed. The interior escapes the two extremes of our own commercial architecture,

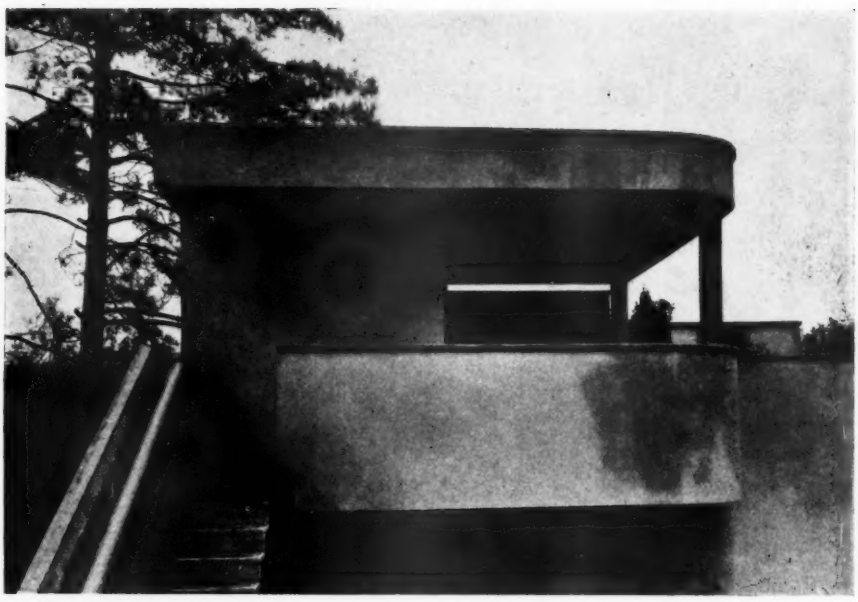
Decorative Glass Lamps at the Entrance to the Champs Elysées Arcade

smugness or coarseness, and is obviously the work of artists who are craftsmen and vice versa.

The French apartment house has developed no typical expression. There are clean, modern types, façades in which the main preoccupation is hygiene and commodity, and there are the apartments *de*

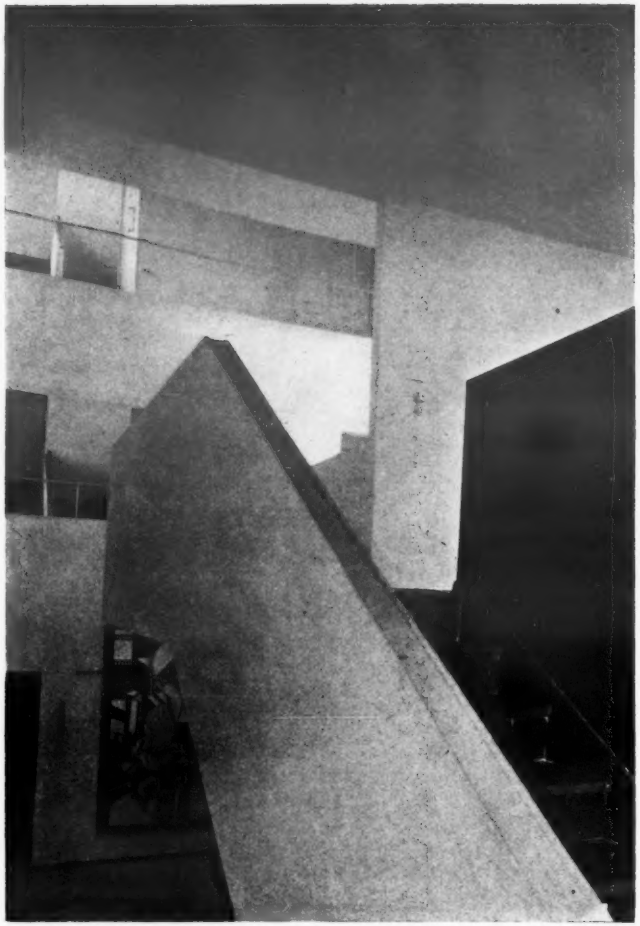
A Modern Hôtel Particulier in the Passy Quarter of Paris

Marquise and entrance doors to the Lutetia Salle des Fêtes
Boulevard Raspail, Paris. L. H. Boileau, architect



House at Neuilly : The Staircase Terminal to the Roof Garden
Le Corbusier et Jeanneret, architects

General View of the Block of Two Private Houses at Auteuil
Le Corbusier et Jeanneret, architects



Staircase in House at Auteuil
Le Corbusier et Jeanneret, architects

House of Monsieur E. B., at Versailles: Entrance door and staircase
André Lurçat, architect

*luxe*, whose interiors reveal a neat and efficient modernism. Interesting is the stepped apartment building in the rue Vavin, in which each tenant has his outside terrace, a type of construction possible only by modern methods.

It is in private work that we find the greatest variety of architectural experiment. From the semi-traditional we pass to the semi-functional, and from that to the temperamental. But these are the dwellings of the more luxurious type, and there still remains another striking French development, that of the economic dwelling, as exemplified by the work of such men as Le Corbusier and Jeanneret, André Lurçat, and a small group of their contemporaries.

The theories of Le Corbusier are full of interest; his books, *Vers une Architecture*, *l'Urbanisine*, *L'Art Décoratif d'aujourd'hui*, are notable contributions to architectural thought. In the realm of æsthetics, Le Corbusier believes that architects have lost the essentials of geometric form, of the modelling of surface, of the value of light. He urges a return to these basic essentials. Practically, and economically, he condemns the wastefulness of our building methods, the lack of standardisation, the complication of our numerous trades, the lack of hygiene in our planning, not only in units, but in groups.

At the Paris Exhibition, the Pavilion by Le Corbusier and Jeanneret for that group of modernists calling themselves " L'Esprit Nouveau " contained the nucleus of the standard dwelling unit to be built either detached or in multiple groups, on a sort of cellular system. In an apartment house built on this scheme each dwelling would have its own open air garden, two stories high, and ventilated by a continuous air shaft.

On a broader basis still, Le Corbusier foresees the reconstruction of cities with huge blocks of tall buildings, sort of gigantic service flats, surrounded by wide open spaces, and served by broad arteries at different levels. The ill-planned and congested city is to be grouped in orderly units surrounded by light and air. Le Corbusier illustrates a central area of Paris replanned on this principle, and the effect is certainly impressive.

In their private work Le Corbusier and Jeanneret put their theories into practice. Their houses have been illustrated in our English publications, and they all show the same outstanding features, namely, standardised column spacing, standardised window and door openings and fittings, a structure of concrete framing with a light infilling, and, most important of all, the flat roof.

In some of these houses, the garden in a sense flows under the building and even over it, for Le Corbusier sees no reason why every house should not have its roof garden and flower boxes. For him the sloping roof is doomed.

Externally we have a clean simplicity. It would be unfair to criticise this architecture as mannered, for, on the contrary, it is a sincere and earnest expression. Internally we see the effort to obtain effects of space and vista, and a process of elimination of detail which obviously calls for a readjustment of our values and ideas as to what should constitute the atmosphere of home.

I will terminate this survey by showing a small house in Versailles by André Lurçat, built of reinforced concrete, and interestingly detailed, relying for its effect on the recognised essentials and not on eccentricity. This house, to my mind, is typical of what is best in the efforts of the young modernists of France, and gives grounds for hope in this movement which is so much of our epoch that it is almost hopeless to expect us to see it in a just perspective.

## Discussion

THE PRESIDENT, MR. E. GUY DAWBER, IN THE CHAIR.

Professor F. S. GRANGER, D.Litt. [*A.*], in proposing a vote of thanks, said: I am sure everyone here will be sorry for me if I am expected to match the lucidity and the wit with which this subject has been put before you. In the few moments that I propose to trespass on your time I would like to put in a word for the poor old academic person. We have seen what eccentricity is capable of, and no one has accused our neighbours in Piccadilly of being exceedingly eccentric. But when we compare the halls of the Royal Academy with some of these houses in which we are invited to live, I, for one, should have rather an inclination towards the Royal Academy.

But, passing from that point to the actual achievement before us, I think the way in which the French genius has adopted the new methods of construction and developed them in some of the buildings which we have seen to-night should encourage us to be

rather more brave. I am sorry to say, however, that I am not quite so convinced now as I was before I heard Mr. Howard Robertson that Mr. Ruskin's criticism of the Crystal Palace is sound. I think the designers of the Crystal Palace and the Eiffel Tower have marked an epoch in the history of architecture in that they have shown a bold treatment of modern things. The great charm of the modern, to me, is the simplification which has been shown to us pictorially in the masterpieces which were put on the screen. The admirable simplification of some of those later designs, those huge blocks, those houses for the poor, open out a happier future, a future which shall not only be hygienic—on which very proper stress was laid—but also cheerful. I should like to think that coloured light might well be employed by architects to emphasise their buildings by night. In one or two of the more delightful slides there was a hint of the application of colour.

I came to-night not sufficiently informed; I can now go back more than sufficiently informed. At Nottingham we have a school of art, and we have, at University College, classes in building construction. When we have taken building construction from our architecture, what is left for the school of art? That is the problem which the French masters have set us, and which has been interpreted by Mr. Howard Robertson. I have much pleasure in moving a vote of thanks to him for his Paper.

Mr. FERNAND BILLEREY, in seconding the vote of thanks, said:

In reviewing contemporary French architecture Mr. Robertson has divided the architects into two groups. One group is the valiant brigade of those who are bravely exploring fresh fields of architectural expression. They are dissatisfied with the old French architectural language; they do not use it—they use instead a sort of Esperanto of their own. On the other hand, I am sorry Mr. Robertson has given to the second group rather a contemptuous name, "pompier." Some of the "pompier" at least realise that the architectural problems of to-day are great, and they may not be as convinced as the others that a fresh language is of necessity required. I am in agreement, too, with M. José. Whether we like it or not, the desire for fresh expressions in architecture does exist. But I am not so sure that these examples of fresh language in architecture have yet produced sufficient gold to justify staking out a claim.

There is one thing that is certain: whether we belong to the "pompier" group or to the other group, the War has brought about changed conditions in regard to building. Great wars always bring in their train fresh inspirations; it happened in Greece after the Persian wars, and the result was the Parthenon. After the Great War came a generally impoverished condition, and the new needs have necessitated simplicity, whether it be in France or here. In the matter of architectural dressing, most of us conform to the fashion of having very little on; some go further and say we should have nothing on at all; while others say if there is anything, let it be something new. Those are the three principal things in this post-war architecture.

We are accused of living now an automatic life, of putting as little brain-work as possible into our work. Lawyers have a way of going to the text-book to draft an agreement; doctors have an automatic way of examining their patients and diagnosing their diseases. This all saves brain-work. I suppose we architects also have an automatic way of doing things. At the same time, I am not sure that we are not replacing one formula by another. When I was a student in architecture, and was being coached for some examinations, I was told: "Whatever simple programme you may be asked to deal with, remember four columns and a pediment, and you will be safe." Now, I suppose, one ought to say: "Whatever programme you have, a blind wall, a very low, very wide opening, with a large architrave round it, a step coping, and a flag-pole, and you are safe."

There is one point I noticed in Mr. Robertson's paper which probably requires emphasis; and that is, that in this modern French work at the Exhibition a large share of praise must be given to the French craftsman. The French craftsman is not a product of any art school or modern theories of production; he is a special breed of Frenchman, which has shown such vitality that it has managed to survive all the moods, fancies and theories which have from time to time shown themselves in France. He is the direct descendant of the old carvers who carved the gargoyles for the Gothic cathedrals, and afterwards carved the Corinthian capitals of the Renaissance in his own French way. We say he is always the same Frenchman. The people the well-known firms employ, the draughtsmen, the modellers, the carvers in wood and stone, the gilders, all these show an enormous amount of cleverness. The craftsmen of to-day have, I think, added a flavour to some of the new attempts of French architects. Theorists are all very well, and the architectural language is suitable if we can express ourselves sensibly and harmoniously. One ought to put into one's work a good deal of honesty and common sense.

Major A. A. LONGDEN, D.S.O. (Department of Overseas Trade): I would like to support the remarks of the last speaker. I know nothing whatever about French architecture, except exhibition architecture, but I feel very strongly that in Paris, at the recent exhibition, the architects built in order

to give the craftsmen a chance, and it was an exceptional chance too. The buildings, though they may have had a certain mid-European influence, were stripped of all their garnishings and customary decorations, and material was used of a temporary nature, and such people as Brandt and Lalique and other great craftsmen were brought into prominence. Then, again, I think architects put up a portion of the building in the Grand Palais to display such things as scent and jewellery. And if an architect can build a building which will tempt everybody to go in, I think he has justified his appointment. And so it was in most of the French buildings, and I think we have much to learn from that.

Captain B. S. TOWNROE: I have very great admiration for Easton and Robertson's work at the Exhibition in Paris, and I think the British Pavilion in Paris exactly hit the mood of a temporary exhibition, and had just that gaiety about it which was needed. That was also the view of many of my French friends. But, very reluctantly, I find myself in disagreement with Mr. Robertson in regard to the eccentric pictures he showed us to-night as typical of modern French architecture. Those pictures may represent the score, but the modern French architecture I have seen can be counted in thousands of modern French working-class houses, and on that point I think we have a great deal to learn from French architects. I may be allowed, perhaps, to give one simple example. Last year I spent a good deal of time going round to see colliery schemes in devastated areas of France, and in other parts of the country, and there I found that architects made it a rule to consider the wishes of the colliers themselves, to consult the miners as to the kind of houses they wanted; and, more important even, they consulted the miners' wives on the matter. Therefore at Longueau, just outside Amiens, you will find very modern houses with various aspects, very different from those in our English colliery schemes, and of a type which might very well be adopted in Britain. Let me turn to a very modern British colliery scheme, which I visited last Saturday, houses designed by a very distinguished member of this Institute. I consulted the colliers and their wives as to what they thought of those houses, and in every case they condemned them, because, they said, "We do not want the bathrooms on the second floor, because the husbands and the lodgers carry the dirt upstairs on their way to the bathroom; we want the bathrooms downstairs."

We in this country will be having a very great chance in the next three years of showing in Paris something of what we can do in British architecture, in connection with putting up a British Institute and College of residence that will accommodate 300 students at the Cité Université. Those of you who have been out there and seen some of the buildings which they have at the City University—the Belgian, the Canadian, and, shortly, the Japanese—will know that it might even exhaust the adjectives which Mr. Robertson has used to-night to describe fittingly those buildings. We hope to put up a British Institute there, and I hope it will be a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects who will have the chance of designing that building, and showing the fellow countrymen of Mr. Billerey what British architecture can do, even in France.

Mr. H. S. GOODHART-RENDEL [*F.*]: I am totally unprepared to speak, and probably I am an unsuitable person, because I have learned for the first time from Mr. Robertson's lecture how "pompier" my tastes are. I agree with what he says about modern French architecture, because so much that he showed on the screen was not architecture at all. I think France was the centre of architecture in the last century, and I think the reason why Paris, among all the capitals, is the source from which all good movements flow is because she has got such an amazing digestion. But I do not care about the things she feeds on in an undigested condition. The new building, the Bon Marché, is a charming piece of work, thoroughly digested, and some of the buildings of the recent Exhibition were those in which you might say that the peculiarities of the 1900 Exhibition have, for the first time, become absorbed and fit to be seen.

Very few of us would defend the eccentricities of the first movement, which is known as *l'art nouveau*, but it had a profound effect on French architecture, just as did the teaching of Le Duc before. Whatever is good in these movements is slowly ruminating in Paris. I have not much use for logic, while it is still apparent as logic, in architecture. Features have to become thoroughly illogical before they are fit to be seen. The whole combination of arch and entablature in Roman architecture, and the whole of the treatment of our modern Gothic, come into this generalisation. Probably it does not become a finished means of æsthetic expression until it has escaped from the realm of logic and has become a thing which a man can use freely.

I have a very high opinion of the amazing courage of the modern French movement in building, buildings which show such astonishing good taste, that taste which never deserts France, especially in the decorative methods carried out in the Paris Exhibition. I have admired very many of them, and such as those which were shown on the screen I admire greatly. Certain people say you must only eat beans, you must not wear shoes or hats, all things which are simple and which we may feel are right, and yet people do not do them. I feel this about some of the buildings. People will not struggle up a ramp, though you may tell them it is

better than stairs ; they will not live in those houses—they will only hang special kinds of pictures in them. I hope Mr. Robertson will forgive me for disagreeing with him in not regarding that as architecture. But I would emphasise the point that the ground which is broken there had got to be broken, and we owe much gratitude to the bold and, perhaps, one-sided people who are doing it. I do not want anything I have said about the French modern movement to make me seem to be against what I regard as the more typical development of it. Some of the modern French houses are the most perfect modern houses of any I have seen. In those things the French are, as they always have been, supreme. It will be deplored that Corbusier is taken as representative of a very characteristic French tendency.

Professor C. H. REILLY [*F.*] : I was unprepared to say anything. I came here to enjoy the paper. I am an old fogey in these matters. I like semi-traditional, semi-functional buildings rather than the purely new, purely functional ones. But, whatever one may say about this modern French architecture, I think the best thing has been said about it to-night by Mr. Howard Robertson. I can imagine no teacher of architecture who can open up a vista more stimulating than Mr. Robertson. What he said has interested me even more than his slides. I agree with Mr. Goodhart-Rendel very much in what he says about this experimental work of the French, which they have taken from the Germans, as happens after all wars ; it is the conquered who often spread their culture, rather than the conquerors. Much of the work shown in the last slides was like the work of Erich Mendelsohn, having voids where we should put supports, and the corner of the building chosen as the place for the window, thus cutting through an apparent support. Those eccentricities seem to have been copied from the German. But it is good for us in England, who move more slowly, that these experiments are made in other countries, that they are " made in Germany," that they are also made in France, and that we can gain from them. We can gradually gain the meaning of ferro-concrete without having to make these wild buildings ourselves. We can gradually find the right kind of ornament, and we shall adapt our age-long tradition until we absorb the best of this modern French and modern German work. That is why I think it is very valuable that we should see it in this way, under such able guidance, and that we should then pass on and go on with our own work.

Mr. H. M. FLETCHER [*F.*] : The chief impression which came to me in looking at Mr. Robertson's slides was a sort of deduction that though style may change and detail may change, architecture does not change. Some very beautiful work was shown, and I think it all observed the laws on which architecture was founded. Laws are different from rules. Rules are made to be broken : laws are made to be observed.

The work which gave me most pleasure was that which was in accordance with eternal laws : the magnificent aerodrome which was shown us at the beginning. The structure of it was not at all mixed up. The solid parts were taken to the ground, and the windows were put between them. And there was no detail in the swimming bath, but it was all organised and rhythmical ; the supports of the roof were carried down to the floor.

The work of the brothers Perret was—I was going to say logical, but Mr. Goodhart-Rendel has cut that word out ; I will say it was all reasonable. The forms were new, and the tower, though you could see the Gothic influence in it, was something fresh. They did not stick it up on the top of a window ; they carried it down to the ground. There were organisation and symmetry in the planning, and the planning was expressed in the interior. But when you come to Corbusier, he did not support anything upon anything. A 2-in. window-frame was considered good enough to carry miles of wall, and I do not think that is anything but an experiment from which other people may learn what to avoid. In general, it goes to show that if we consider the laws of architecture and abide by them, we shall not go wrong.

The PRESIDENT : We have had an exceedingly interesting discussion, and I am sure we should like to hear Mr. Howard Robertson's reply. I put the vote of thanks to you.

Carried by acclamation.

Mr. HOWARD ROBERTSON (in reply) : In view of the lateness of the hour, I will try to be brief, but I cannot resist taking up, in a very short form, the challenge of one or two speakers.

I think Mr. Fletcher really understands what I have been driving at : he mentioned the slides I like best myself. One must, in these things, pick on the extremes ; it is of no use showing average stuff ; you must take the high or the low, according to the point of view, in order to gather what goes between. That was why I said at the beginning that this was only a sketch, with extremes illuminated, and the rest left in the dark and to the imagination.

Professor Reilly always interests me very much, because I think he is such a fair critic. He says he likes to see all this experimenting going on in France and to feel that Englishmen can watch it from afar and profit by it.

But there are some misconceptions in regard to our good friend Corbusier. He is, in many senses, more logical than he appears. True, he has thin piers at the corners of his buildings, but there are reasons for that. One is that he builds on the standard size, and his piers only require to be very small for the weight they have to carry, as they are of reinforced concrete. He

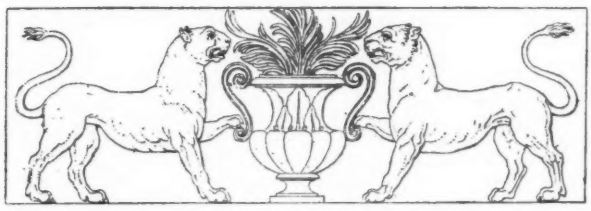
likes to have windows in the corner of the room because, he says, that gives the best light, and that is logic ; it is a point of view at any rate. Perret likes a tall window, because then you get light at the back of the room. Corbusier says have a long window because it lights the walls, and perhaps you do not light the top. So the course, midway between the two, is to put the window in the corner; then you light both the walls and all the room. A window in the corner of the room is not a mere idle fancy.

The function of Corbusier is to stimulate the diehards. He makes people think, and is, therefore, valuable.

I sympathise with M. Billerey because I feel that the man who does the modern work is the backbone of the nation ; but he would soon descend to the suet pudding in architecture if there were not people like Corbusier to shake him out of his complacency.

And that is what I feel about Mr. Townroe. I do not think he realises that in housing even a man like Corbusier has advanced a step. He is building a large scheme at Bordeaux, building on the cellular principle, very economically, and I think the houses will be very agreeable to live in. That is a contribution which is not in the traditional, regional style of France, but it may be good, for all that, and one cannot despise that effort. It may contribute something, it may even contribute something more vital than a resurrection of the kind of cottage which you get in the district, a reconstruction after the war in the traditional manner. I am not arguing for it. I am only saying one has to look all round the question, and take the good out of the new work, and not say " That is deplorable because it is new." It may have something which you can seize upon ; and in housing, as in other things, you must keep your eyes open and watch everything, and take the best out of every contribution. I think Corbusier and his kind have made a contribution, because they are building cheaply, and those who can give the workman a good and cheap house are doing a good thing, especially if that house is inoffensive. Corbusier set out to give a good, hygienic dwelling at a low cost, and if architects do that, their contribution is good. They may not be architects when they do it, but they are organisers.

The situation sums itself up in this : that you will find a gradual evolution of architecture in France, as everywhere else. You will find extremists producing most remarkable work, but always as a kind of spur to the others. In England, fortunately, we have got one or two such spurs. They will never be very popular, but they keep the others pushing forward along the road of progress.



# Stained Glass in Milan Cathedral*

BY F. C. EDEN [*F.*], M.A. OXON

With the exception of some windows at Arezzo which are not Italian work, stained glass in Italy has almost escaped the notice of the historian of art. That reproach has been removed so far as Lombardy is concerned by the publication of this thorough and admirably documented work.

There is evidence of considerable activity in the art all over Central Italy and Venetia before the close of the fourteenth century, but so far as Lombardy is concerned none whatever. The reason lay not in any lack of trained artists, for many workers from across the Alps passed through on their way south, but simply in the form of the church windows. The buildings were almost all romanesque, with characteristically small and narrow windows unsuited for the display of coloured glass. The Gothic architecture which was spreading elsewhere was belated in Lombardy, and it was not till the Duomo was started, with its enormous fenestrations, that the opportunity arose.

Such a vast amount of glass was required that the Administration deemed it advisable to establish their own furnaces and workshops. The question then arises, who was responsible for the designs and cartoons, painters or glass designers? In Venice we know that designs for windows were prepared by Mocetti and the Vivarini; in Florence the greatest artists of the time, as Donatello, Paolo Uccello and Ghiberti, were commissioned to design windows for Santa Maria del Fiore, while in Bologna we hear of Morelli and Francia being similarly employed. But in Milan it is only from 1400 to 1450 that painters of note made designs for glass. After the latter date there comes a complete change; no names of famous artists, such as Bergognone or Zenale occur in the accounts, but only those of *maestri vetrari*, who prepared their own drawings and carried through the whole work in the cathedral atelier.

Lombardy, then, differs from other regions in the possession of a central school of glass-painting specialists, independent of the contemporary school of picture painters. Foremost among these are N. da Varallo and the De Mottis and Da Pandino families, whose output supplies most of the illustrations in the book, and very capable and workmanlike it is.

The Administration also acted as a commercial firm and sold the productions of their workshops to other churches and religious establishments in the dukedom. In fact, it seems true to say that the story of glass-painting in Milan is the story of glass-painting in Lombardy.

An amusing sidelight on contemporary manners comes from a regulation made by the Fabbrica on 21 August 1407, for the appointment of a watchman to restrain the activities of ragamuffins who were wont to employ themselves on feast days by throwing stones at the windows. Two years later they decided upon the erection of copper wire guards. It would be interesting if this should prove to be the earliest record of this disfiguring but sometimes useful contrivance.

Excepting one large roundel, much mutilated, and sundry insignificant fragments, all the great pre-Renaissance windows have disappeared, for at Milan the nineteenth century wreaked its spite with a vengeance upon its greater predecessors. In 1833 and for the next sixty years the care of the glass was entrusted to a firm named Bertini. Their method was to break up the old windows, reserving only such fragments of glass as were deemed serviceable for working up again into new windows. In the course of years they laid violent hands upon all the ancient windows, re-making here, renewing or re-touching there, altering inscriptions, disarranging the logical order of the subjects and generally recomposing in the most arbitrary way.

It is largely owing to their ignorance, conceit and incompetence that the general effect of this Milanese glass is so unsatisfactory. Bertini's "sciatteria inqualificabile" has cast a slur upon it all. But in spite of this the 190 illustrations show that a large amount of admirable work has survived all vicissitudes.

Great praise is due to the author, who, amid the disabilities of the war years, carried through this pioneer work of exploration in the untrodden field of Lombard glass painting. He has traced the history of a school of industrial art hitherto ignored by scholars, and has rescued from oblivion the names of artists of high aims and outstanding capacity.

* *Le Vetrate del Duomo di Milano.* By Ugo Monneret de Villard. Milano. Alfieri e Lacroix. 3 vols.

## THE LIBRARY.

### IL BRONZO E IL RAME NELL'ARTE DECORATIVA ITALIANA. *By Arturo Pettorelli. Milano.* 180 *lire.*

This collection represents the best bronze work made in Italy from Etruscan times, through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, down to the present day. Every side of the craft is represented, from the great works of Ghiberti and John of Bologna to Mediæval church fittings and eighteenth century door furniture.

The examples are well selected and illustrate all the standard examples as well as good work that is not so well known. The reproductions, which number 385, are well done, and printed on dull paper; the text is in Italian.

The value of such a volume is great, as it brings within the compass of a single book examples the search for which might entail ransacking a library. G. B. T.

# Stonework of the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle*

PROFESSOR A. P. LAURIE'S REPORT. BY BASIL OLIVER [*F.*].

It sometimes happens that an architect is consulted about a damp building and decaying stone, and the circumstances are the more embarrassing when the building has been designed by himself.

But in the case of the Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle Professor A. P. Laurie was the expert called in to advise with regard to the condition of the stonework and the dampness of this large and imposing building. The Report, a copy of which he has presented to the Library, explains how, "Below the Bowes Museum the river [the Tees] is running approximately from West to East, and the general slope of the ground on which the museum is built is almost due South, the ground rising behind the museum to a height of some 670 feet, while the museum itself stands at a height of about 550 feet, while the fall of the ground is from North to South, the dip of the strata is in the opposite direction, so that water draining from the high land behind the museum will tend to bank up against the strata, and therefore there will be no free natural underground drainage. The springs rising in the land behind the museum, and the ease with which water can be found at shallow depths, confirms the conclusion that owing to the dip of the strata the museum is built on ground which is saturated with water, and on which even a water pressure may exist."

". . . The museum is stated to have been built entirely out of Dunhouse Quarry, but from local information it seems possible that a certain amount of Stainton Quarry was used as well."

Professor Laurie therefore obtained samples from both of these quarries for examination and analysis. The analysis proved that the Dunhouse stone consists principally of quartz and contains a certain percentage of magnesia and "that the greater part of the stone is insoluble in acids, and of these insoluble contents 92·5 per cent. consist of silica, the greater part of this silica being quartz."

He also prepared microscopic sections of both stones referred to and found them, on examination, to be practically identical in structure, and exposed them "to special tests, namely, exposure to hydrochloric acid vapour alternately with washing in a stream of water," a method of testing building stones which he has found of great practical value.

For the sake of comparison Dr. Laurie examined two other important buildings on the same site, namely, the unfinished Chapel and the Grammar School, and with a view to getting further information as to the behaviour of Dunhouse Quarry stone he made inquiries as to other buildings in Barnard Castle and Darlington, which had been built out of this quarry.

". . . The conclusion come to was that the Dunhouse stone is an excellent building stone and stands well the test of time as long as it is not exposed to excessive moisture, but where it is so exposed such as in roof balustrades or overhanging cornices unprotected by flashing with lead, it is apt to decay."

The result of this geological inquiry was to come to two conclusions :—

(1) That the museum is built on a very wet site in which it is highly probable that there is a certain water pressure below the foundations.

(2) That the stone selected for the building, namely, that from Dunhouse Quarry, is a sound building stone if not exposed to specially bad conditions."

The Report then proceeds to deal with "The Examination of the Building," "Causes of Stone Decay," "The Principal Cause of the Stone Decaying in the Bowes Museum," "Decaying Stone," "Efflorescence on Cellar Walls," "The Source of the Sulphate of Magnesia," and finally, "Conclusions and Recommendations," with a suggestion, drawn in section in black and red ink, for the treatment of the front part of the building.

The chief external defect revealed by a careful examination was a serious stone decay taking place along a more or less continuous band running round the building a few feet from the ground. "An examination of the building inside showed that damp was rising in the internal walls, disintegrating the plaster, and in some parts of the building there is a marked mouldy smell. It is evident, therefore, that water is being drawn up into the walls by capillary attraction and that the stone decay is principally found along the lower portions of the walls into which the water is rising. The height of the concrete floors inside the building is well above the level of the damp-course.

In order to get information as to the conditions existing under these floors a hole was dug in one corner of the building. Underneath the concrete there was a layer of rubble which was fairly dry, but the soil lying below the rubble was very wet, the wet soil being well above the level of the damp-course. The foundations of the partition walls were lying on this soil and there was no indication of a damp-course in these walls." . . . There is thus a soaking wet soil well above the damp-course which "is rendered perfectly useless from the point of view of protecting the walls." Advantage was taken of the opening of this hole to dig right down to the foundations with a view to seeing whether the building was built on rock or on the boulder clay. Boulder clay saturated with water was found lying below the foundation stones.

It is evident, therefore, that owing to the method of construction adopted the external walls are being kept saturated with water which would be sufficient alone to cause decay of the stone, but . . . there are special local conditions existing which make this saturation with water peculiarly unfortunate.

"Along the back of the building there runs an open built drain with a thin cement bottom. The bottom of the drain slopes towards each end of the building, and at its lower end the cement floor is just lying in contact with the damp-course. Therefore in the middle of the drain the floor of the drain is about six inches above the damp-course." A pond, no longer water-tight, a little

* *Report on the Condition of the Stonework of the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle.* By Professor A. P. Laurie, M.A., D.Sc., Principal of Heriot-Watt College, Edinburgh, and Professor of Chemistry at the Royal Academy of Arts, London.

further back from the building, is a contributory cause of trouble.

All the evidence leads Professor Laurie to the conclusion that " the main source of the sulphate of magnesia which is crystallising within the stone and breaking it up is to be found in the sub-soil waters," and he discovered that the damp-course was a mixture of pitch and sand, from ¼ in. to ½ in. in thickness, and now, unfortunately, hard and brittle. This " has probably fissured and cannot be regarded as reliable protection from the rise of water in the walls above," and he thinks that it has evidently been squeezed out to a great extent.

He points out that " any methods of waterproofing the walls by means of asphalt would not be effective unless accompanied by underpinning, removing the present damp-course, and replacing it by a new efficient damp-course."

Professor Laurie's recommendations at the end of his Report are of particular interest. His suggestions are as follows :—

" (1) The pond at the back of the building should be drained and replaced by a rubble drain running along the whole length of the building and well beyond at both ends with agricultural pipes laid in the bottom and connected to drains at the two ends so as to carry off the water down hill towards the river.

" (2) That the floor of the open drain along the back of the building be broken up (etc.).

" (3) That the floors in the front of the building should be cut through all round the edges of the walls, the soil removed to the foundation level and replaced by rubble on the top of which the concrete floor can be relaid.

" That at intervals round the external walls ventilators be introduced above the damp-course and opening into the rubble, these ventilating passages being cut through the walls and left without any impervious lining so as to help to drain the walls of damp air.

" That similar openings be cut through the dividing walls inside the building so that a complete circulation of air be provided for, through the external walls, the rubble, and the internal partition walls."

(4) It is further suggested that the partition walls in the cellars at the back of the building " could probably be underpinned and a slate damp-course be introduced level with the concrete floor."

(5) " The decaying stones outside the building should be hosed down in the summer three or four times, with intervals of a day or two between to allow to dry out. They should then be allowed to get thoroughly dry and treated with Silicon Ester* after brushing with a soft brush. Cornices and arches of windows should be flashed with lead, and the building should be repointed, using ' mastic ' where the pointing is deficient."

Dr. Laurie has examined, with the utmost care and thoroughness, a very sick patient, diagnosed the ailments and prescribed for them. How he sets about his task and performs it is of great value to architects and others called upon to deal with a similar problem. His investigations are highly scientific and his Report is a model of its kind.

*It is worthy of note that Silicon Ester can also be recommended for the preservation of crumbling brickwork—B.O.

THE HOME OF THE MONK. *An account of English Monastic life and buildings in the Middle Ages. By the Rev. D. H. S. Cranage, Litt.D., F.S.A., Hon. A.R.I.B.A.* 8*vo. Cambridge*, 1926. 6*s*. [*Cambridge University Press.*]

The author tells us in the Preface, " the object of this little book is to attract the ordinary reader to the subject of English monastic buildings." It should succeed in doing so, for it is interestingly written, with enough detail to give a clear vision of the life which was led in these buildings without wearying one who is not making a special study of the matter. It is charmingly illustrated with photographs, well selected for the purpose, and four plans of (1) a Benedictine house at Durham ; (2) a Cluniac house at Wenlock ; (3) a Cistercian house at Kirkstall ; and (4) a house of regular Canons (Augustinian) at Haverfordwest.

The first chapter is about the cloister, which stood south of the church and in which the monks spent much of their time. The three following chapters are about the buildings which stood on the eastern, southern and western sides of the cloister. The abbot's house, the infirmary, the out-buildings, and the church have each a chapter to themselves, and the book concludes with a chapter on the Religious Orders, giving briefly, but clearly, a short sketch of monastic history, and the chief differences between the orders. There is a chapter on the Dissolution, a bibliography, and an index.

In describing the life of the monks the author has quoted the words of the original authorities, the rule of St. Benedict, the rites of Durham, and the customaries of certain houses, very effectively. He takes a just and impartial view of monasticism, he neither pleads for nor against, but describes that scheme of life so as to make the reader understand the purpose of the buildings which remain.

The book is a small one, and due proportion must be kept between the parts, but I think a rather more detailed account of the Church, explaining more fully the necessary difference between a monastic church and a parish church, would add to its value, without distorting the proportion of the church to the rest.

CHARLES SPOONER [*F.*].

HISTORY OF THE PARISH AND CHURCH OF KILKHAMPTON. *By the Rev. R. Dew, M.A.* 8*o. Lond.* 1926. 7*s*. 6*d*. [*Wells, Gardner, Darton and Co.*]

It is good to see another carefully compiled parish history, this time of a Cornish village whose name is familiar on account of the famous bench-ends in the church, several of which are illustrated. Following a summary of the early history of the parish, the church is dealt with topographically, though it occupies a small proportion of the book ; the study of the rectors, noteworthies, domestic buildings and church lands occupies much attention. To weave together scattered facts is difficult, but the book is quite readable and the illustrations are good. The index is more thorough than is often the case. It is pleasing to see the increase in local histories, which should do much to inspire respect for the past and help to ensure the preservation of rural features.

H. V. M. R.

# Artistic Craft Gilds of the Middle Ages

BY EDWARD WARREN [*F.*], F.S.A.

I have carefully read Mr. Knowles's very excellent paper, which appeared in the last issue of the JOURNAL, on the Gilds of the Middle Ages, and find myself generally in complete agreement with that gentleman, and in especial with his obvious desire to divest the whole question of the medieval gilds of the false glamour and nonsense which have grown, in modern days, around this most interesting subject.

Mr. Knowles very temperately and courteously points our some of the many absurdities, in the historical sense, and indeed in the practical sense also, of much of the pretty writing upon the subject of ancient gilds, which is so readily accepted by the vast majority of readers, and from which his quotation from Mr. R. A. Cram's *Ministry of Art* shows that even that gentleman is not free.

The medieval craft gilds in England and Northern France, of whose constitution, intention, and performances there is a good deal of direct historical evidence, were craftsmen's organisations certainly intended to maintain a high standard of workmanship, but also a fairly high standard of payment, and the gradations of the worker's status in each craft or " mystery " was akin to that obtaining in medieval universities and in military organisations. In the Universities there was, and still is, the triple gradation of Undergraduate, Graduate, or Bachelor, and Master, as in military organisation there were Page, Esquire, and Knight.

In the crafts gilds there were apprentices, journeymen—i.e., workers paid by the day—and masters. The gilds seldom, if ever, worked collectively as one body—I have met with no instance—though master members combined sometimes to carry out large works. In this last sense the masters may have arranged to share profits occasionally, but the journeymen—much less the apprentices—had no such chances ; the former were paid the agreed wage per diem.

That the crafts gilds, in many cases, did maintain a high standard of workmanship is shown by the established fact that before an apprentice, " out of his time" had become a journeyman, and was received into the gild as a member, he was frequently, if not generally, required to submit a specimen of his work for inspection by the gild—entry being granted, so to speak, by examination, and in some cases examination of a very stiff kind. In this matter I venture to differ from Mr. Knowles. The magister, master, or maitre, was admitted as such when he became in fact a master, employing others under him, but that status, in the gild sense, seems to have been very generally granted by examination of his workmanship as well as by the payment of fees, and the giving of a supper or dinner to the gild in many cases. Fees and fines naturally were the support of the gild.

In many instances, in a small town where the number of craftsmen was not sufficient to maintain a gild devoted to one craft, members of several trades combined to form a combined gild. This seems to have been the case at Wallingford, for instance. The Gilds Merchant—which were companies of tradesmen, not of craftsmen, and generally much richer than the artificers' gilds—seem, alas ! to have very generally looked down upon the latter, a cause of frequent jealousies and quarrels. In great towns, and notably in London, many of the crafts gilds acquired, and several of them have kept, considerable wealth. Under the name of Companies, we have still the Goldsmiths, Silversmiths, and Carpenters.

The effects of that awful visitation, the Black Death, near the middle of the fourteenth century, upon the crafts gilds must never be overlooked. It seems to have first shown itself in Dorsetshire, possibly arriving at Bridport, and to have rapidly made its way to Bristol, and to Gloucester and Oxford, where its effects were fearful. The mortality amongst the masters and the journeymen was naturally higher than amongst the apprentices, and, for 20 years or so, it almost arrested craftsmanship in the south and west. The natural result of the sudden death of a very large proportion of the fully trained craftsmen was the employment of many of the half-trained juniors, with that marked deterioration in many crafts, especially in masonry, that we are aware of. Those of the fully trained stone carvers who escaped were naturally in great demand, and in many cases set up " image-makers " shops on their own account, ceasing to carry out general carving. This was especially the case in the three cities just mentioned.

The work gained in nicety of detail, but lost much in vigour by this change, the fine robust mason sculpture of the first four decades of the fourteenth century was lost, and " prettyfication " set in.

In the south, masonry, in fineness and delicacy of detail, rapidly lost ground—the deterioration was remarkably quick. The Black Death must never be forgotten as a prime factor in the change of workmanship of the mid-fourteenth century.

Mr. Knowles is, of course, perfectly right in stating that the crafts gild, like all the other gilds, did not as a corporate body trade for profit, and further, that membership " was not based on free will but upon compulsion." No status as a craftsman was possible without membership of a Gild—at any rate, up to the Black Death.

# Correspondence

## WORKS BY ROME SCHOLARS AND JARVIS STUDENTS.

*Rome*, 9 *March* 1927

*To the Editor*, JOURNAL R.I.B.A.,—

SIR,—As I read them here in Rome, Mr. Ronald Jones's criticisms of some of the drawings by Rome scholars and Jarvis students shown at the Imperial Gallery of Arts in January do not seem to me to be altogether happy.

He does not seem to realise that the evidence on which Mr. Williams's plan of the Baths of Agrippa is based is, in the first instance, a drawing by Palladio in the Devonshire collection, now preserved in the R.I.B.A. Library (portfolio ix, f. 14) together with drawings by Baldassare and Salvestro Peruzzi. These agree, both with a fragment of the Marble Plan of Rome which came to light in 1901 and with the remains still existing on the site, which are, if one penetrates (as I know that Mr. Williams has done, for I have been there with him) into every house, courtyard and cellar, are a good deal more considerable than one might suppose. Precisely the same thoroughness was shown by Mr. R. A. Cordingley, in his study of the Mausoleum of Augustus.

There is, too, a most striking analogy of plan with the larger baths at Trèves (generally called the Imperial Palace until recent years); and it would be interesting to know when and where the plan originated, for it is utterly unlike those of the rest of the thermæ of the city of Rome.—Yours very truly,

THOMAS ASHBY [*Hon. Associate*].

## PROFESSOR C. H. REILLY'S WIRELESS ADDRESSES.

54 *Upton Road,*
*Slough, Bucks.*
5 *March* 1927.

*To the Editor*, JOURNAL R.I.B.A.

DEAR SIR,—The able manner in which Professor C. H. Reilly has taken advantage of the splendid opportunity presented by the broadcasting of his views on "Modern Building and the Town of To-day," induces me to express my sincere appreciation. I have noted, with pleasure, that the derogatory remarks of a previous letter on this subject, remain unsupported. Professor Reilly's criticism of Regent Street and Kingsway is masterly. In the case of the former his judgment ought not to embitter the architects concerned. Their problem was to provide a structure as a separate entity modified to produce some semblance of at least "local" unity. The absence of central control, on the points in question, has brought about a series of compromises, many features of which are excellent in themselves—but at the price of a badly designed street. Professor C. H. Reilly has fully merited the support of the profession with his well-delivered, informative and popular exposition of the problems involved. Many who were indifferent will be stirred to thought and action and a useful work for the benefit of architecture has been accomplished.—Yours faithfully. E. J. DIXON [*A.*].

*Chairman of the Bucks Society of Architects.*

The following letter from Professor C. H. Reilly was published in *The Times* on 5 March 1927:—

## REGISTRATION OF ARCHITECTS.

DEAR SIR,—Under the heading "A Plea for Liberty," Professor Beresford Pite has appealed in *The Times* for opposition to the Bill for registering architects. He has said this registration will depend on the passing of a series of examinations to be held by the Royal Institute of British Architects. He referred to "the examination rack and thumbscrew syllabus." Professor Pite seems to have forgotten, however, that the Royal Institute has very wisely recognised in the amended form of the Bill the great schools of architecture already established in the country and has extended to them the freedom of teaching and exemption from its own examinations which in the past it has for many years accorded to them in connection with its own membership.

As long as the proposed registration of architects was based solely on an examination test carried out by a central authority I was as strong an opponent of it as anyone else. It is obvious that any test of that type might make a sieve through which mediocrity would pass, while genius, misunderstood by the examiners, might be held up. With the acceptance, however, of the five-year courses in the chief schools of architecture as equivalent to the whole examinational scheme the matter is entirely altered. The schools can form their own tests, which can contain, as indeed they do, a minimum of written examinations. In their place the schools can and do make their awards on a great series of designs submitted throughout the whole five years. In the present-day school of architecture, with juries of practising architects to judge these designs, it is inconceivable that genius should not be able to do itself justice. Indeed, the success of the modern schools of architecture proves the contrary.

On the general question of the good to the world at large which registration of architects might bring about, a great deal might be said. In America, where it is in force, it cannot be argued that inititative has been fettered. In no country is there a greater amount of daring and experimental building, and in the newer work of the trained men, combined with a better general standard of taste. On the other hand, in our own country we are all at the present moment waking up to the vast danger to the countryside and to our old towns of the uncontrolled building operations of untrained persons. The bungalow menace, for instance, is by itself a very real one. Yet most of the structures which are doing the damage are by persons styling themselves architects, though they may be in practice auctioneers, estate agents, contractors, or anything else. If the Bill passes it means that in a generation this menace will be largely removed. No one will be able

to call himself an architect who has not received a minimum of training or has experimented in designs on paper and had those experiments checked by competent authorities before he experiments in solid materials in the view of all of us.—I am, yours truly,

C. H. REILLY,

School of Architecture, University of Liverpool.

## PRESERVATION OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

### REPORT ON NINE MONTHS' WORK.

A meeting of the Representative Committee for the Preservation of St. Paul's Cathedral was held at the Deanery on 7th March. The Dean of St. Paul's presided and there were also present :—

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Oxford and Asquith, Canon Newbolt, Canon Alexander, Canon Simpson, the Archdeacon of London, Sir Lewis Dibdin, Sir Charles L. Morgan, Sir John A. Mullens, Sir Alfred Bower, Mr. Mervyn Macartney, Mr. Basil Mott, Mr. G. W. Humphreys, Mr. E. C. Trench, Captain C. S. Peach, and Mr. H. T. A. Dashwood.

The fourth report of the Works Sub-Committee was received, as follows :—

During the period that has elapsed since the last report, dated 21 May 1926, the execution of the work necessary for the preservation of St. Paul's Cathedral has proceeded satisfactorily ; various measures have been taken to increase the rate of progress, while yet avoiding anything which might at all jeopardise the safety of the structure.

The tubular scaffolding, mentioned in the last report, round the choir piers on the church floor, has been extended to give access to the whole of the main arch over the choir. A detailed survey of those portions of the choir piers which could not be examined before the removal of the organ, has now been made. As was expected, the general condition of the ashlar masonry compares unfavourably with that of the other main piers ; this is particularly so in the case of the north choir pier, largely to be attributed to the effects of the fire which occurred in the vestry during the building of the organ about 1705. The movement on the south side of this pier, extending from the main architrave down to the neckling of the smaller pilasters, has caused a slight crack in the plaster used to protect the carved frieze, when the present organ was erected against this pier in 1870. A similar crack is found in the protective plaster covering on the north side of the south choir pier. These cracks, as well as the general condition of the fabric throughout the dome area, are under close and continuous observation.

The injection with cement or cementation of all the eight main piers in the crypt, from the foundations to the church floor, supporting the dome structure, is nearing completion. A number of holes additional to those originally bored have been drilled and injected in order to leave no doubt as to the thoroughness of the work. When the two piers of the north transept which had been the subjects of the previous grouting by the Commission of Architects and Engineers in 1923 and 1924 were injected, most satisfactory evidence was obtained of the beneficial effects of that grouting ; the core of these piers was found to be much more compact and united than that of the piers not previously treated and the small quantity of cement that could be injected showed that the cracks and voids had been almost entirely filled.

In addition to this cementation, a large number of reinforcing bars have been cemented into the grouting holes in the above mentioned piers in the crypt. These bars are of the special material and design described in the last report. Further tests of their physical properties carried out by the National Physical Laboratory have given satisfactory results.

As the existing plant used for the preservation work was found inadequate for the various processes of drilling and cementation, additional plant has been purchased and installed in a hut on the south side of the Cathedral.

The consolidation of the main piers in the crypt, supporting the dome structure, being so far advanced, it is now possible to extend the work to those piers above the level of the church floor. During the operations of cementation and reinforcement in the crypt, the piers were strutted as a precaution, in the manner previously reported, and the same procedure will be adopted for the work above the level of the church floor. To aid in this procedure steel structures to stand between the piers, reaching to the level of the springing of the great arches, have been ordered, but delay in the delivery of the materials is being experienced as a consequence of the recent dispute in the coal industry. These structures are designed to form the basis of the strutting of the piers, and to reduce the employment of wood to a minimum, but they will also afford an opportunity of keeping the whole surface of all the piers under continuous observation during the execution of the work.

Mention was made in the previous report of the ties inserted between the piers and bastions during the original construction, the majority of which were found to be broken. The work of replacing these by a system of stronger ties has begun.

A great deal of consideration has been given to various schemes for the reinforcement of the dome structure at the platform level immediately above the great arches. A number of methods have been considered and the model, the construction of which was mentioned in the last report, has been found very helpful in the examination of the problem, the object being to provide for the transference of a greater proportion of the weight of the upper structure to the bastions in the eventuality of settlement taking place in any of the piers, in conjunction with the bracing and encircling of the drums envisaged in the summary of recommendations in the final report of the 1921-1925 Commission of Architects and Engineers.

The seventh complete series of levelling observations from the datum in the General Post Office Courtyard to all the plugs embedded in the masonry of the Cathedral, from the crypt to the Whispering Gallery, has just been concluded, the result of which is that no evidence of settlement in the foundations nor vertical movement in other portions of the dome structure is detected.

Observations on plumb wires suspended from the top of the cone, the keystones of the four great coffered arches and the main cornice at the top of each of the eight piers have been made at regular intervals in continuation of those instituted four years ago, and also linear measurements of the diameters of the inner drum at the level of the Whispering Gallery and of the width of the annular space between the inner and outer drums. Observations with a theodolite have also been made, so that the position of the inner drum at the Whispering Gallery level can be referred to a system of co-ordinates on the church floor. All these observations show an absence of movement in the dome structure, beyond the minute alterations brought to notice in the report of the Commission of Architects and Engineers.

In addition to the detailed architectural survey of the masonry of all the main piers, a theodolite survey of the piers, bastions, end walls of the transepts and arches of the dome area has been carried out at six different levels and referred to the co-ordinates mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The observations are practically completed to the attic level, and the plotting of the results obtained is in progress. This survey affords an accurate indication of the various distortions that exist in the piers and arches.

While there is no evidence of recent subsidence or move-

ment of the dome structure as a whole, a few cases of flaking have recently been observed in the masonry of the piers above church floor level in addition to the slight cracks previously mentioned in this report. They are not new features, but as the history of the Cathedral shows, have been recurrent and continuous from the time it was built. Ordinary methods of repair in the past have entirely failed to arrest them or to relieve the local intensity of stress from which they arise.

These facts were among the reasons which led to the recommendations of the 1921-25 Commission. Taken in conjunction with the numerous and extensive cavities in the interior of the piers in the crypt, formerly suspected but now proved to have existed by the quantity of cement inserted by the grouting—the fracture of the ties mentioned (also formerly surmised but now disclosed) their incompleteness and defective condition—they emphasise the necessity for the work authorised by the Representative Committee now in hand.

The information accumulated from 1921 to the present time by the precise engineering and architectural surveys before referred to, especially since facilities have accrued on the closing of the dome area, removal of organ and erection of scaffolds, and the further knowledge of the structure gained during progress of work in the crypt, now provides reliable data of the structure and enables the complete and comprehensive remedial scheme under consideration to be developed which before could only be presented in outline with a general indication of the nature of the work involved. The ultimate development of this scheme is borne in mind in the work in hand.

Micrometer readings between the plugs embedded on both sides of some of the cracks in the fabric, as explained in the final report of the Commission of Architects and Engineers, have been taken monthly, and do not afford evidence of a permanent increase in the width of these cracks, though slight alternating movements are discernible.

Careful observations of the wall temperatures of the inner and outer drums have been taken and recorded constantly since July 1925. The marked difference between the temperatures recorded in summer and winter is such that the stresses produced thereby must be taken into consideration.

As the building in which the resident engineer's office was situated is to be pulled down, and the architect's office in the Cathedral is unsatisfactory, it was decided to build a temporary office hut on the north side of the Cathedral to accommodate the resident engineer and the assistant architect. These offices are now in occupation and will also be used for meetings of the Works Sub-Committee.

The expenditure on the preservation work generally since the date of the last report by the Works Sub-Committee is about £23,500, but an increased rate of expenditure is to be expected in the near future, when the new plant has been fully taken into use and the various schemes of reinforcement are in progress.

The report was fully explained to, and discussed by, the Representative Committee. The architects and engineers of the Works Committee were able to state as a result of the works so far carried out that they found the condition of the structure quite as good as they had expected. They were able also to produce samples of the work which they had carried out showing how perfectly the cementation work fulfilled its object. They were well satisfied from the experience gained since the work was first commenced that there was no foundation for the alarming statements which have been made during the past few months.

From "The Times," 8 March 1927.

## VISIT TO GOLDSMITHS' HALL.

SATURDAY, 5 MARCH 1927.

The visit arranged by the Art Standing Committee to Goldsmiths' Hall took place on 5 March. Mr. F. T. W. Goldsmith [*F.*] has kindly contributed the following account of the Hall and the visit.

In about the year 1340 the Company acquired the site of the Old Hall of the Fraternity or Guild of Goldsmiths which was in existence in the early part of the twelfth century, certainly as early as 1130. According to the Company's records the Second Hall was built about 1407. A third hall was erected between 1634-36, partially destroyed by fire in 1666; was restored and served the purposes of the Company until 1829, when it was replaced by the present structure designed by Philip Hardwicke, R.A. The whole elevation to Foster Lane could be seen to advantage while the site of the old post office remained vacant, but now alas! it has been hidden from view—except at close quarters—by purely commercial buildings which completely shut in the fine Portland stone front. The buildings constituting "Goldsmiths' Hall" are varied in use and somewhat in general character. The principal rooms most certainly convey an air of wealth and power and influence possessed by this, one of the oldest of City Companies. This wealth and influence is conspicuously used and exercised in the advancement of education and to the benefit of charities of all kinds.

The visitors were received at the foot of the great staircase by the Surveyor to the Company, Mr. A. Burnett Brown, F.R.I.B.A., who explained the special features and uses of the various rooms. The Livery Hall, which is about 80 feet long, 40 feet wide and 35 feet high, is used for Livery Dinners and a noble hall it looks when lit up by hundreds of wax candles in the lustre chandeliers.

The Drawing Room is of a more ornate character; it is 42 feet long, 28 feet wide and 24 feet high. A room that particularly appealed to the visitors is the Court Dining Room. It is simply and effectively panelled in oak, with a plain—perhaps too plain—flat plaster ceiling. The room used for swearing in apprentices is a delightful little place, panelled in oak, with a domed plaster ceiling. The panelling, as well as the over doors and beautiful carving over the mantelpiece, was discovered in the vaults of the hall and was adopted and fitted up here by the present surveyor. The Goldsmiths' Company still carry out the important national duties of testing all gold and silver Imperial coinage — duties imposed upon the Company under a charter or patent in the year 1248. The thanks of the party were voted most heartily to the Prime Warden and Wardens and to all those who had contributed to a very pleasant and interesting visit.

## ARCHITECTS' BENEVOLENT SOCIETY. INSURANCE DEPARTMENT.

### MOTOR INSURANCE.

The attention of Members has already been directed in the JOURNAL to the special terms in motor insurance which are now being offered to architects by the Architects' Benevolent Society's Insurance Department. A large number of enquiries has been received and it is gratifying to have to report that every enquiry, whether with regard to motor cars or motor bicycles, has resulted in a completed insurance. The Architects' Benevolent Society offers low premiums and a quick and reliable claims service.

Please address enquiries to:—The Secretary, A.B.S., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.

# Informal Lectures to Workers in the Building Trades

*The second series of lectures to workers in the building trades began on 22 February 1927, when Mr. Thomas Wilson gave a Paper at the Royal Institute of British Architects on the "History of the Palace of Westminster."*

## "HISTORY OF THE PALACE OF WESTMINSTER."

### BY MR. THOMAS WILSON, CLERK OF WORKS TO THE PALACE

NO plot of ground holds for the English race so many sacred memories as the eight acres upon which the Palace of Westminster stands. The spot was sacred before the Norman Councils met, and its traditions and associations link together our ecclesiastical and parliamentary annals. It is difficult to convey the significance of the sum of all the manifold forces which have contributed to hallow the site and make the it Mecca of the Anglo-Saxon peoples. Its buildings as well as its laws serve to connect us with these dim origins of Palace and Abbey, and carry us back far beyond the Conquest, to the very sources of English nationality. Attaching to this site and building, there are emotions quite peculiar and quite personal, such as no other site and building in the world evokes.

We look back to the scant remains of the Roman occupation, and all we see is a probable ford, a tomb, and the trace of a pagan legend. The earliest Christian tradition is almost equally dim. A town springing up near the Isle of Thorns (Thorney Island), a probable ford, perhaps a King's itinerant Court, a hermit, an early monastic building—such are the shadowy origins. The Saxon age furnishes us with the legends of King Canute's palace, burnt to the ground in the Confessor's time and rebuilt again, rising probably side by side with the Confessor's early Norman Abbey Church of St. Peter. Not till the middle of the 11th century do we reach firm historical ground. A national consciousness is moving, but it is still a time of legend. Finally the fact emerges that there is established on the site a Shrine, a Palace, and a Treasury, and out of these at last a Parliament is born.

THE FORD.—For the legend of the ford at Thorny Isle which emanated from the suggestive brain of Sir W. Besant there is not a shred of historical evidence ; but there was certainly during the Middle Age, and probably farther back, at least a ferry, a river crossing which still survives in the name Horseferry Road.

Like Roman London, Westminster had its origins intimately bound up with the river and its fords, ferries and bridges. It is then upon this site that the English people begin to hammer out their first dim administrations of Parliamentary institutions, which, with that other strangely unique gift, lyrical poetry, were to be its two supreme and signal contributions to civilisation.

Just as at London lower down the stream the seafarer and the roadfarer met at a fordable point of the river, so at Westminster a similar fordable point became the focus spot round which the city grew.

The Abbey was always conceived of as enclosed within the precincts of the Palace, and in official language every Coronation still takes place *not* in the Abbey, but in " Our Palace of Westminster."

The first date on which we have authentic mention of the Palace is 1017, when in the reign of Canute the Abbey is indicated as being " near the King's Palace." Even earlier, the site of the Monastery is recorded as being anciently the seat of Kings, and a Papal Rescript of doubtful authenticity declares that hereafter for ever it is the *Palace of the King*, Constitution, and consecration —the repository of the imperial regalia.

Here, then, in the performance of such rites are the imaginative beginnings of Westminster, the Abbey, the Palace and The City.

All this, imaginative perhaps, serves to reveal the nature and origins of the site.

The point I wish to make is this, that when we walk past the Houses of Parliament and the Abbey, with its Old Treasury and Chapter House, and St. Margaret's, and the Old Parliament House, if we merely regard each as a separate building and a distinct entity, then we miss the whole significance and the inner meaning of their history, and the uniqueness of the site.

The unity of the site is shown in the way in which the Abbey and Palace, the two powers sacred and secular, are blended and interpenetrated from the very beginning of their history. A beautiful bit of symbolism is woven into the Bayeux tapestry, which expresses the fact of the close relationship of the spiritual and secular powers. The man standing and holding on to the roof of the Palace is touching with his hand the weather vane of the Abbey. As Dean Stanley says : " The probable intention of this figure is to indicate the close contiguity of the two buildings. If so, it is the natural architectural expression of a truth valuable everywhere, but especially dear to Englishmen. The close incorporation of the Palace and the Abbey from its earliest days is a likeness of the whole English constitution—a combination of things sacred and things common—a union of the regal, legal, lay element of the nation with its religious, clerical ecclesiastical tendencies, such as can be found hardly elsewhere in Christendom." To this hour certain portions of the ecclesiastical buildings are in the hands of the secular power of the State, viz. : the Chapter House, the Chapel of the Pyx, and *The Old Parliament Office*, which were once the property of the Abbey and Benedictine Monastery of St. Peter.

The main interest attaching to any consideration of the ancient Palace of course centres in the Great Hall. Its importance calls for a special lecture, and I have been asked to leave it. No existing portion of the fabric in any way epitomises the historical memories of the nation as does Westminster Hall, carrying us back right beyond Magna Charta to the time of William Rufus. It became the first fixed meeting place of the peripatetic Courts of our early Kings, and so was the site on which the national unity was first forged.

The evolution of Parliament is not yet completed, and sequestered in one of its rooms it is fitting that the idea of a Dominions Parliament should have its rise and beginning. The end of the representative principle may not be finally achieved until it has been carried forward into the domain of the overseas Dominions.

I shall now confine myself to these portions of the Palace buildings which epitomise the ancient associations and traditional memories of ancient medieval Court

life and the primitive beginnings of the High Court of Parliament.

The political aspects are important, but the topographical charm of the site and its building is evident when we consider such remnants as are left, and such records as are available, especially the Painted Chamber, St. Stephen's Chapel, the Great Hall, St. Mary in the Crypt, and the Tudor Cloisters; of the last a part still remains as a vivid record, indicating some of the past glory of the place, erected when the mediæval buildings had reached their fruition and were about to pass into the hands of the Tudor age, only, alas, to receive their final defacements from modern ignorance and vandalism until they were mostly consumed in the Great Fire of 1834.

Three buildings are of signal importance :—

1. The Painted Chamber. 2. The Great Hall. 3. St. Stephen's Chapel.

### The Painted Chamber and Chapter House.

Two buildings epitomise the ancient parliamentary associations of the Palace—*The Painted Chamber* and The Chapter House. All traces of the first are gone, while in the existing Abbey Chapter House (much restored) we still possess the shell of the earliest meeting place of the Commons. It is here rather than in the Chapel of St. Stephen's that the memories of the primitive House of Commons gather.

From the death of Edward the Confessor, 1066, to the crowning of Henry III, covers exactly 150 years. Into this century and a half falls the mention of the *Painted Chamber*, the building of the Great Hall, and the traditional foundation of St. Stephen's Chapel.

In the mediæval Palace the *Painted Chamber* may be regarded in some respects as the central feature of interest in point of antiquity. Ten years before the Conquest we have mention of it. It may be considered as the chief link in the chain of an unbroken past dating from the time of the Confessor, or even earlier, right on to the Great Fire of 1834.

Its final demolition did not take place until 1840—for after the fire its charred and ghostly walls were left standing and formed the shell for the temporary chamber in which the Peers met until the present Houses of Parliament were built and the Lords occupied their completed Chamber in 1847. Its earliest name was St. Edward's Chamber. It is here that the Confessor is said to have passed away—in a sort of trance—on the eve of the dedication of his Abbey Church, which he built to the glory of God and St. Peter. Henry III, our great builder-king, early in his reign lavished on its decoration the most splendid work which he could command in the way of painting and costly embellishment. Within its walls meetings of the earliest King's Council took place, the Great Council (Curia Regis) and later Parliament of the Edwards frequently sat in it. As the attendance of the Commons grew in number—without in any way consciously declaring a division of the Estates—the knights and burgesses were sent or went voluntarily to the Chapter House to parley among themselves, a kind of Grand Committee—and out of this the House of Commons arose. The Refectory and then the Chapter House at the Abbey probably because there was not room for them in St. Edward's Chamber) thus became the earliest place of meeting of the House of Commons.

The wall paintings which adorned this chamber are very important in the history of English primitive art, and have been unreasonably neglected by art historians. They are, indeed, among the earliest records which we possess of English art, reaching back to 1237—a very early date indeed as regards English painting. Contemporary evidence tells us that they were "painted beyond description." Fifty years after they were finished they were being repaired, which shows that frescoes evidently stood no better in the London atmosphere in the thirteenth century than they do in the twentieth. It is regrettable that no effort was made to preserve any fragments of such precious work.

As regards our national artistic effort in the past, we have a persistent disposition to attribute all our ancient art to foreigners and foreign influences. The truth, of course, is that there can hardly be a better documented historical fact than that most of the work of the Mediæval Age in England was the output of English craftsmen. For these works at Westminster the Plantagenet monarchs pressed into their service the local craftsmen from Cambridgeshire to Kent, as is proved by the precepts tested personally by them at Westminster. The importance of these paintings is seen when we realise that, executed as they were at dates varying from 1237 to 1265, evidently some of them were begun before Cimabue was born. We need not be surprised to find these paintings by English hands, for if our native Sculpture at Wells, for instance (about the same date), "bid fair to rival contemporary efforts at Tuscany," why should native painters at the King's Palace be behind Italy? It is only the eclipse of the Gothic spirit by the ignorance of later ages that has denied our native achievements. The tapestry looms of London in 1350 prove this, as do the inventory of the St. Stephen's ecclesiastical wardrobe, and we know what existed in our own parish churches at that date.

These paintings were entirely English in feeling, not Italian. The costume, the technique, and design all bear witness to the high skill of our native craftsmen under the sway of an enlightened patronage and encouragement from a king who, however tyrannical he may have been politically, was certainly entirely enlightened artistically.

The conditions relating to wages and employment on the King's works are set forth in the records which have been preserved.

### St. Stephen's Chapel.

Of the ancient buildings which existed at the Great Fire in 1834, none had such a brilliant and tragic history as St. Stephen's, and I can touch it only quite briefly.

Founded by Stephen in 1135—seventy years after the Conquest—its origins are wrapt in legend. Whatever the subsequent monarchs may have done in the way of additions, including the authenticated and considerable works of Henry III, these were almost wholly destroyed by the fire of 1262, after an existence of a century and a quarter. Of the size and design of this early chapel we know nothing definite. Perhaps it was smaller than the new chapel started by Edward I, the foundation of which was laid in 1292. Operations appear to have gone on languidly during the troubles in the reign of Edward II

until 1330, when Edward III three years after his accession restarted the work and continued it until its completion about 1380, so that the building covers a period of about 90 years, and was therefore the work of a couple of generations of English master builders and craftsmen, so that the building was in hand during the whole of his fifty years' reign.

Professor Lethaby has summarised what the chapel meant as a building:

"The upper chapel of St. Stephen's was perhaps the crest of the Gothic movement in England, a work imaginative of fantasy, yet as a whole simple, large, noble."

We can form some faint idea of its beauty from extant views, showing its completion as a magnificent ecclesiastical Collegiate Chapel as it existed for nearly two centuries down to the time of Edward VI, with its dean and twelve secular canons, twelve vicars, four clerks, six choristers, a verger and a chapel keeper, its hospitium in Lombard Street, and lands in Yorkshire and various annuities.

It was certainly influenced by the French King Louis's building (1245–1257), St. Chapelle at Paris.

What befel this English mediæval jewel and with what desecrating hands its beauty was destroyed is a sad story. In 1547 Edward VI, when he dissolved the collegiate chapels, granted St. Stephen's to the Commons as their future house, and they left their ancient meeting place in the Chapter House and crossed Old Palace Yard to come back to the Palace, a much stronger force in the constitution than when they left it. They were the new men of a new age, and like most pioneers of new political movements they had little reverence for the material evidences of what they were leaving behind. A collegiate chapel was no doubt a very comfortless hole in which to legislate, and in their efforts to make it more appropriate no one will ever accuse the Stuart and Hanoveran architects (Wren included) of behaving reverently to this gem of English Gothic.

Internally the chapel contained a series of remarkable and beautiful wall paintings. As regards their date, these were probably about 120 years later than those in the Painted Chamber, and, as we should expect, showed an enormous advance in technical achievement. From the Fabric Rolls, which we possess, we learn that the paintings represented at least sixteen years of continuous work. They were undoubtedly by English artists, and are earlier by 25 years than the Wilton House and Westminster portraits of Richard II., probably the earliest English paintings which we possess.

The story of their discovery is an interesting one. In 1800, by Act of Union, one hundred Irish members were added to the House of Commons. It was found necessary to take down the wainscoting fixed by Wren in order to cut back the wall some two feet between the buttresses to give the necessary space for additional seats for the Irish members. Behind this panelling the paintings were discovered, and for the last time there was disclosed to human sight a fleeting glimpse of those gorgeous mediæval wall decorations, sculpture, and stained glass which made the chapel a shrine of English art in the fourteenth century. Works of extension had to be done then, as now, at enormous speed; the architects practically paid no attention to the preservation and recording of the important discovery. The records made before the final destruction of the paintings were, to say the least, far from adequate, considering their great importance, and, of course, the Great Fire of 1834 completed the work of destruction of such as remained. Before the end of St. Stephen's as a sacred building, English Gothic building was to flicker once more before it finally expired in the ornate and beautiful Tudor-Gothic cloister which is still standing, and is used by members as a cloak room. This beautiful late work was almost the last piece of pure English Gothic done before the style finally died, to be revived four hundred years later in the work of the present building in the first half of the nineteenth century.

### The Work of the Vandals.

Wren's work at the Palace is shown by the following report:—

Wren "In obedience to an order of the honourable House of Commons of January 18, 1692, as the Surveyor and Comptroller of his Majestie's workes doe attend the Committee appointed in order, that they view the building of the House of Commons, pursuant to his Majestie's directions; and debating upon the place the defects that appeared, were of opinion that the danger is not imminent; but notwithstanding, to remove the apprehensions of the future, doe judge it fit and necessary that the UPPER PART OF THE WALLS BE MUCH LOWER, and that a new Roofe be laid and a new Ceiling made, and some other things performed of less consequence for the accommodation of the House, they are further of opinion that this worke be done with expedition, that it may be ready before the next Session of Parliament."

Sixty years prior to Wren's alterations, 1692, Hollar gives us his famous view (1634) of the Palace river front. After Wren had done his worst on the old chapel we have 30 years later Paul Sandby's charming drawings of the same front (1712).

For a century Parliament sat snug and content as we see them in their ugly place, the Gothic interior of the chapel used as a shell and changed beyond recognition. The interior and exterior of this mean looking building was the mere ghost of the beautiful Chapel of Edward III.

This, then, was the beginning of the end of St. Stephen's as a jewel of Gothic art. After Wren came Soane, Wyatt, Chambers, Smirke, and other unnamed architectural vandals.

In 1782 a certain Mr. Moritz, a literary gentleman from Germany, recorded his impressions of St. Stephen's. "For the first time," he writes, "I saw the whole British nation assembled in its representatives in rather a mean looking building, that not a little resembles a chapel. It is not at all uncommon to see a member lying stretched out on one of the benches while others are debating. Some crack nuts, others eat oranges or whatever else is in season. There is no end to their going in and out; and as often as anyone wishes to go out, he places himself before the Speaker, and makes him his bow, as if, like a schoolboy, he asked his tutor's permission."

The emphasis is no longer artistic, but severely political. After Elizabeth it is no longer used as a Royal residence. The ancient Palace becomes a mere mosaic of its beautiful past, battered and torn by succeeding generations, who altered it to meet the particular needs of their age.

At the beginning of the 19th century Wren's front was still standing, by 1825 it had been altered into a recognisable imitation of the ancient work. This façade was rendered in stucco, and under the direction of Wyatt a new window was formed in the end, and two pinnacles added in the usual fantastic style of decoration which marks the works of that architect; the window is merely constructed for show, as the three modern ones which light the interior still exist in the middle of it.

The end came in 1834. "On the night of October 16th, 1834," says Barry's biographer, "Mr. Barry was returning from Brighton on the coach, when a red glare on the London side of the horizon showed that a great fire had begun. The Houses of Parliament had caught fire and all attempts to stop the conflagration were unavailing. No sooner had the coach reached the office than he hurried to the spot, and remained there all night. All London was out, absorbed in the grandeur and terror of the sight. The destruction was so far complete that preservation or restoration was out of the question; the erection of a new building was inevitable, on a scale and with an opportunity for the exercise of architectural effort hitherto unexampled in England. The thought of this great opportunity and the conception of designs for the future mingled in Mr. Barry's mind, as in the minds of many other spectators, with those more obviously suggested by the spectacle itself."

### The Present Building.

The decision to build a new Parliament House on the site of the ancient Palace was an opportunity to realise a long cherished, much discussed, and often postponed idea.

The state of feeling and spirit in which the present building had its rise is fully expressed in the official language inviting competitive designs for the new House of Parliament. "We shall not simply possess a structure that may bear comparison with any foreign structures of the same era, but that will at once take English architecture out of the shadow of its own greatness by rivalling the glorious productions of our forefathers, the builders of the wonderful abbeys and cathedrals."

How far the Victorian age succeeded is a personal question which can be decided by those who know the present building. It was a great architectural effort and a crown worthy of the Gothic Revival. In 1847 Parliament occupied its new and present House.

As we began, so we end, at the seat of the centre of our nationality. It is now called the Heart of Empire. The Mother of Parliaments is still teaching her children. The stream of the old tradition flowed on and still flows, we hope, to a larger imperial unity.

## Discussion

MR. H. M. FLETCHER [*F.*] IN THE CHAIR.

The CHAIRMAN (in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Wilson) said: He has taken us through the whole course of English history from the time before the Conquest, when there was nothing but what he has spoken of as probably a ford at Westminster, down to the present day; and he has shown us the persistence of tradition in every branch of our Parliament. He has also shown us that we should not give up the pride of our own craftsmen. I think it is new to many of us that the paintings in the Painted Chamber and St. Stephen's Chapel were evidently the work of Englishmen, and it is a thing we should be proud of and continue to emphasise.

Before I came here I was reading, in the "Architectural Magazine," which was published from 1834 to 1839, such accounts as I could find there of the rebuilding of Parliament. It is very gratifying to see the immense interest which was taken in the work. There was a great competition, and a number of designs were sent in, but there was not the slightest doubt, in anybody's mind, that Barry's was by far the best. It has always seemed to me an interesting point in architectural history that Barry, who was the finest Classic architect of his time, as you can see in the Reform Club and the Travellers' Club and some of his great country houses, should also have produced the finest Gothic building. But there is a curious point about that building: that though the clothing of it is Gothic the structure is really Classic. I think nobody who walks along opposite the Houses of Parliament can fail to see that the grouping of that great river front is a classic conception, the perfectly symmetrical massing of it, and the long, low horizontal lines, though all the details are perpendicular and it is cut up by innumerable buttresses and lines which extend from ground to roof. The great extent of the level roof and the slight differences in height between the various masses are not what you would find in mediæval buildings; they would have broken it up more by gables and towers and inequalities of level. The idea at the bottom of Barry's mind was Classic, and he translated it into the national form of Gothic, which was then considered the appropriate thing for the Houses of Parliament. And while I am speaking of that view, I should recommend anybody who does not know it to take the most beautiful—and usually the most lonely—walk in London, and that is along the Embankment underneath St. Thomas's Hospital. It commands a magnificent view of the Houses of Parliament and the towers of the Abbey, and there are seats every 30 yards or so, but never a soul there.

Various speakers then put questions to Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON: I will try and answer the questions as briefly as possible.

The first was from the Chairman, about Barry being a Classic architect, and how curious it was that he got the Classic spirit even into his Gothic work. I think that when this building is mentioned it should always be remembered what a tremendous contribution was made to it by Pugin. It is necessary to drive this home continually that the building should be attributed to the two men. We have Pugin's sketch-book, and we know that the interior woodwork was his.

It seems to me that the selection of the stone for the Houses of Parliament is a magnificent tribute to the ineptitude of experts. In 1840 a committee was set up to enquire what was the best form of stone to use. They spent £40,000 on the committee, visited 92 quarries, found all the best kilns, and then selected the stone on

the strength of the evidence they had before them in regard to one particular church that had stood so well from the thirteenth century to the present time. And on the strength of the evidence that it was magnesian limestone, they said, " This is the stone for us," yet I think any mason in the neighbourhood could have told them it was not magnesian limestone. From chemical analysis it should have stood better than any other stone in London. They forgot, or they did not know, that magnesian limestones included limestones like Bath stone, and that they are full of geological fissures, with which atmosphere has nothing to do; and if you put the stone into a building, apart from the atmosphere, on account of the geological fissures and planes it will drop down, especially if you put it into large projections, such as you have in Gothic work. It is not that the acids of the atmosphere are denuding the stone so much as that the stone is inherently bad; it was bad at the beginning, and it should never have been used for this building. There is a building which is more interesting, from the point of view of decay, than this—the Chapel at Lincoln's Inn, which was refaced at that time. On the strength of the report of the Houses of Parliament Committee, Butterworth used the same stone. Look at the building to-day! It is worse than the Houses of Parliament. Look at the gateway where you come into Lincoln's Inn Fields, look at what has happened by wind erosions on some of the battlements. The statue of Queen Victoria on the canopy, which is on the top gable, fell into the street three or four years ago.

I was asked how much of the early wall exists, and how you can find out which is old and which is new. There is very little of the old left. Patches of the cloister of St. Stephen's were left, the battlements were knocked off two sides, which Barry restored and repaired. It was only for twelve years after it was built that it was used for ecclesiastical purposes, and then it became a paper office and so on. The House of Commons used it for civil purposes, and it has remained a civil building. Its date is 1535, late Gothic, later than King's College vaulted ceiling at Cambridge. Members use it to-day as a cloakroom. There is Westminster Hall and the crypt of St. Stephen's Chapel, which is covered over by modern decoration, but the ribs and bosses are just as they were left. Apart from that, I do not think there is anything left. The whole site was cleared for the new building.

I am glad the Chairman pointed out to you the technical wheeze devised by these old painters, who knew what they were doing.

The Chairman answered the question as to how far the sculpture was the work of Englishmen. I will take another example. The period he spoke of was the late fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the Nottingham school of alabaster went all over the world. Recently South Kensington acquired the *Twelve Apostles* from Spain, which had been imported from Nottingham in the late fifteenth century. There were no alabaster carvers in the world as late as the fifteenth century which could touch the English craftsmen in Nottingham. To take an earlier example, go to the Chapter House at Westminster, and look at the two images as you go into the lobby. There are two angels of the Annunciation which are equal to anything you will find at Chartres or anywhere in France. Professor Lethaby says they are equal to the best sculpture in the French schools, and they were carved at St. Martin's le Grand, in the City. Take another case. There is sculpture in Westminster Abbey which is the work of an Essex craftsman called Torel, one of the greatest bronze workers of the Middle Ages. It is the effigy of Henry III. Torel was a London goldsmith. He learned his work in Touraine, probably; but these fellows travelled all over the world in the Middle Ages; the workmen did not stop at home. Torel went to Touraine to get some training, and then came back. Men of the Tudor period, when they looked at his work, added an " i " on to his name and said " That was done by Torelli, an Italian." When we begin to enquire into it we find he was an Essex workman, a London goldsmith named Torel. The name is still in existence in Essex. There is no doubt, I think, that he came to Westminster to do his job while his wife looked after his shop in the City. He was not a Royal Academician, he was a workman on the look-out for the best jobs.

Then there was the other, rather utilitarian question of Mr. Sharpe, about the want of foresight in not making the Chamber larger. The present House seats 485 members, and I think there are at the present time 621 members. I am speaking from memory. But all the members never turn up at the same time, and it is right, I think, that the Chamber should be a little smaller than is required for the total number of members because, from the acoustic point of view, the present House of Commons is an ideal building, an effect which Barry achieved by the false ceiling. The Chamber has been made very comfortable, notwithstanding the grumbling of members about want of ventilation.

### POWER OF WAIVER APPLIED TO SINGLE REGULATIONS.

The London Building Acts Committee of the R.I.B.A. desire to draw the attention of members to the following extract from the minutes of the London County Council :

The London County Council have resolved,

" As regards the objection raised by the Ministry of Health, that a power of waiver applied to single regulations would result in a tendency to postpone the difficult and important task of bringing the main regulations up to date, and to rely upon working upon continual waivers, until the regulations did not really govern the matter, we have asked all Committees concerned to secure that, if the exercise of a power of waiver becomes so frequent as, in effect, to make regulations more honoured in the breach than the observance, the amendment of the regulations shall be undertaken."

It is hoped that this will result in the early issue of the revised Reinforced Concrete Regulations and the amendment of the Building Acts which have been so long under consideration.

### COPYRIGHT IN PLANS.

In the Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects dated 20 March 1926, a case bearing on the infringement of the Architects' Copyright in plans was reported as having been settled in terms satisfactory to the Architect.

Similar proceedings were taken in the Liverpool Chancery Court in December 1926, and on the hearing of the motion for an injunction, the defendant gave an undertaking not to commence any further houses in accordance with the plaintiff's plans pending the trial of the action.

Negotiations followed between the legal representative of the parties, and a settlement was arranged which provided for the delivery up of all plans taken or copies from plans bearing the name of the plaintiff, and an undertaking not to use or build houses from such plans or from any detailed drawings bearing the plaintiff's name in the future, and to pay £100 costs.

It was also agreed that the plaintiff be at liberty to publish a report in the Architects' JOURNAL as to the Architects' Copyright in their plans being admitted, and their right to delivery of them and to prevent their use by others for buildings.

### REGISTRATION AS PROBATIONER R.I.B.A.

Attention is called to the fact that the Council of the R.I.B.A. has decided that after 31 December 1928 no one shall be registered as a Probationer unless that person has passed one of the recognised public examinations in the required subjects.

A list of the examinations recognised may be obtained free at the R.I.B.A.

### R.I.B.A. INTERMEDIATE AND FINAL EXAMINATIONS AND RELEGATED CANDIDATES.

The attention of candidates is called to the fact that the Council of the R.I.B.A. has decided that unless a candidate passes in at least two subjects in the Intermediate and Final Examinations he shall be required to take the whole of the Examination at a subsequent sitting.

# Notices

### SPECIAL AND BUSINESS GENERAL MEETINGS, 28 MARCH 1927.

A Special General Meeting will be held on Monday, 28 March 1927, at 8 p.m., for the following purposes :—

To read the Minutes of the Special General Meeting held on Monday, 13 December 1926.

To elect the Royal Gold Medallist for the current year. The Chairman to move :—

That, subject to His Majesty's gracious sanction, the Royal Gold Medal for the promotion of architecture be presented this year to Sir Herbert Baker, A.R.A., F.R.I.B.A., in recognition of the merit of his work as an architect.

### THE ELEVENTH GENERAL MEETING.

The Eleventh General Meeting (Business) of the Session 1926–27 will be held on Monday, 28 March 1927, at the termination of the Special General Meeting, for the following purposes :—

To read the Minutes of the General Meeting (Ordinary) held on Monday, 14 March 1927 ; formally to admit members attending for the first time since their election or transfer.

To proceed with the election of the candidates for membership whose names were published in the JOURNAL for 19 February 1927 [pp. 285–6].

### VISIT TO THE STAR AND GARTER HOME, RICHMOND.

A visit has been arranged by the Art Standing Committee to the Star and Garter Home, Richmond, to take place on Saturday afternoon, 2 April 1927. As the number of visitors taking part must be strictly limited, members are requested to make early application for tickets to the Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, W.1.

### EXHIBITION OF MODERN BRITISH ARCHITECTURE.

The Annual Exhibition of Modern British Architecture will be held in the R.I.B.A. Galleries from 27 April to 3 June 1927.

All works intended for the Exhibition must be sent in on one of the following days :—

Works from London exhibitors—Monday, 21 March.

Works from exhibitors outside London—Tuesday, 22 March.

(Hours for the reception of works, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

### REGISTRATION OF ARCHITECTS.

VOLUNTARY REGISTER OF PERSONS WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE R.I.B.A. OR OF ANY ALLIED SOCIETY.

The Registration Committee of the R.I.B.A., with the approval of the Council, has opened a voluntary register of persons who, *not* being members of the R.I.B.A. or of any of its Allied Societies, desire to have their registration qualifications recorded in view of the intention of the R.I.B.A. to promote a Bill for the Registration of Architects.

The object of the voluntary register is to provide and maintain, with the registers of the R.I.B.A. and of its Allied Societies, a complete record of persons in *bona fide* practice as architects, either as principals or assistants, in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

While there is no charge for record in the register and such record does not involve any obligation on the part of the persons registered, or the R.I.B.A., or the Registration Committee, the existence of such a register in the event of a Registration Act coming into force in this country will greatly expedite and facilitate the machinery of Registration.

The register will be subject to revision and amendment from time to time, and the Registration Committee reserves the right to discontinue the system of voluntary registration at any time, and in the event of a Registration Act coming into force the voluntary register will be discontinued.

Particulars for record in the register should be entered on the forms provided for the purpose. These can be obtained on application to the Secretary of the R.I.B.A. Registration Committee, at 28 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.

### ELECTION OF MEMBERS, 20 JUNE 1927.

Associates who are eligible and desirous of transferring to the Fellowship are reminded that if they wish to take advantage of the election to take place on 20 June 1927 they should send the necessary nomination forms to the Secretary R.I.B.A. not later than 2 April 1927.

# Competitions

### CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CIVIC CENTRE.

The Corporation of the City of Birmingham invite those qualified or practising as architects or town planners to submit designs in competition for laying out an area for the purposes of a civic centre. Assessor, Mr. H. V. Lanchester [*F.*]. First premium £1,000. Last day for questions 31 January 1927. Designs to be sent in not later than 30 June 1927. Conditions, on payment of £1 1s., may be obtained on application to the City Engineer and Surveyor, Council House, Birmingham.

### SHAKESPEARE NATIONAL MEMORIAL THEATRE, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.

The Governors of the above invite architects to submit designs for the Shakespeare National Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon.

The competition will be open to architects of the British Isles and America. It will be in two sections—a preliminary competition for sketch designs only, from which six designs will be selected by the assessors; each of the selected competitors will be paid £100 premium towards the cost of preparing a further more detailed design, which will form the second half of the competition.

The selected architect will be paid in accordance with the Schedule of Charges sanctioned by the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Conditions of competition, with site plan, etc., can be obtained from the Secretary, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon, on payment of a deposit of £1 1s. (which will be refunded should the conditions be returned within one month).

Preliminary designs must be delivered to Stratford-on-Avon not later than 15 June 1927.

The Governors of the Shakespeare National Memorial Theatre have appointed the following architects to act as Assessors for the Competition for the new Shakespeare National Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon :—Mr. E. Guy Dawber, President R.I.B.A., and Mr. Cass Gilbert, President of the National Academy of Design of America (who will both act in an honorary capacity), and Mr. Robert Atkinson, F.R.I.B.A.

### LEXDEN COUNCIL SCHOOL COMPETITION

Members of the Royal Institute of British Architects must not take part in the above Competition because the conditions are not in accordance with the published regulations of the Royal Institute for architectural competitions.

### PROPOSED TOWN HALL AND LIBRARY, LEITH.

The Corporation of the City of Edinburgh invite Architects, resident or practising in Great Britain, to submit, in open competition, designs for a Hall and a Library which it is proposed to erect upon an area of ground lying between Junction Street and Madeira Street. The Corporation have appointed Sir George Washington Browne, P.R.S.A., Edinburgh, to act for them in this competition as their Assessor in adjudicating on the designs submitted. Premiums, £400, £300, £200, and £100. Total cost, £70,000. Last day for questions, 26 February. Date of delivery of designs 30 April 1927. Conditions may be obtained on payment of a fee of £2 2s., which will be returned on receipt of a design in accordance with the conditions or if the conditions are returned within four weeks. Apply to Mr. A. Grierson, Town Clerk, City Chambers, Edinburgh.

### PROPOSED NEW OFFICES, TROWBRIDGE, WILTS.

The Wiltshire Working Men's Conservative Benefit Society invite architects to submit designs in competition for new Offices proposed to be erected on a site in Stallard Street, Trowbridge. Assessors, Messrs. Cyril A. Farey and Robert Lowry, A. and F.R.I.B.A. Premiums £150, £70 and £30. Last day for questions, March 1. Designs to be sent in not later than 12 April 1927. Conditions may be obtained from the Chief Secretary, Mr. Henry T. Dyer, Stallard Street, Trowbridge, Wilts, by depositing £1 1s., which will be returned after the receipt of a *bona fide* design or if the conditions are returned two weeks before the closing date of the competition.

### DESIGNS FOR NEW FACADES, ALBERT SQUARE, MANCHESTER.

The Directors of the Tenth Manchester Building Trades Exhibition offer an award of £200 to the Architect placed first by the Assessors, on condition that the Assessors consider the design to be worthy of the award. The Competition consists of designs for new façades on the

N., S. and W. sides of Albert Square, Manchester, and on one side of a new Grand Avenue which it is proposed to lay out on the axis given on the plan. Assessors, Mr. H. S. Fairhurst [*F.*], Professor C. H. Reilly [*F.*], Professor A. C. Dickie [*A.*], Mr. Francis Jones [*F.*], and Mr. John Swarbrick [*F.*]. Designs to be submitted not later than 1 p.m. on 26 March 1927, and addressed "Architectural Competition," Competition Manager, City Hall, Deansgate, Manchester.

### WINTHROP HALL AND OTHER BUILDINGS FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Premiums £300, £200, and £100. Total cost, £150,000. Jury of adjudicators, Leslie Wilkinson [*F.*] (Professor of Architecture, University of Sydney), President (1926), of the Royal Institute of Architects of Western Australia (Mr. A. R. L. Wright, L.R.I.B.A.), and a member of the Senate, University of Western Australia. Last day for questions, 31 March 1927. Designs to be delivered to the University, at or before noon on 24 August 1927. Conditions may be obtained gratis from the Agent-General for Western Australia, Savoy House, 115–116, Strand, W.C.2.

# Members' Column

### MESSRS. J. HAROLD GIBBONS AND FRANCIS OSLER.

Mr. J. Harold Gibbons [*F.*] and Mr. Francis Osler [*A.*] have gone into partnership with offices at Centre Tower, Abbey House, Westminster, S.W.1.

### ARTICLED PUPIL.

MESSRS. TATCHELL AND WILSON, FF.R.I.B.A., Bank Chambers, 32 Strand, W.C.2, can accept an Articled Pupil. No premium required for suitable candidate.

### ROOMS TO LET.

ARTIST residing now chiefly in country desires to let, unfurnished, as an architect's workroom, a large room in his set of residential chambers in Lincoln's Inn. The room, which measures 24 feet by 24 feet, is a fine Queen Anne one having an excellent light, with four windows overlooking New Square. The use of a small room adjoining the two forming the whole of the lower floor of the chambers, can be arranged for rent about £120. Electric light and telephone on the plug system. A "Daylight" Light is also available.—Write Box 8,327, c/o The Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

F.R.I.B.A. has large top room to let, good light, fitted drawing table, near Grays Inn. Rent £40 per annum. Telephone, clerical assistance, etc., if required.—Apply Box 1527, c/o The Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

ARCHITECT (F.R.I.B.A.) wishes to let large room adjoining Lincoln's Inn. Rent £70 per annum, inclusive of light and heating and fitted drawing table.—Reply, Box 5331, c/o The Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

### PARTNERSHIPS WANTED.

F.R.I.B.A. (42), with wide London experience and having small connection in large suburban town near London, wishes to join a firm of Architects of good standing, with a view to partnership. Can place small capital if required.—Apply Box 2517, c/o The Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

A.R.I.B.A. (37), desires Partnership in or near London. Wide experience in London and New York. Own practice in New York last few years. Apply Box 7373, c/o The Secretary, R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

### PARTNERSHIP.

LONDON F.R.I.B.A. (45) is open to take into his practice with a view to partnership, a young Architect who is fully qualified and has a good active or potential connection.—Apply Box 1527, c/o The Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

MESSRS. ELGOOD & HASTIE have removed to new offices at No. 10 Henrietta Street, Cavendish Square, W.1 (5 doors west of present office). Telephone No. remains unaltered, Mayfair 1812.

### APPOINTMENT WANTED.

Disengaged: a senior Assistant, lately engaged on one of the larger city contracts and just completing a period of service on a big west end scheme. Keen, energetic, accurate and speedy. Reply Box 4444, c/o The Secretary, R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

# Minutes XIII

SESSION 1926-27.

At the Tenth General Meeting (Ordinary) of the Session 1926–27, held on Monday, 14 March 1927, at 8 p.m., Mr. E. Guy Dawber, F.S.A., President, in the chair,

The attendance book was signed by 30 Fellows (including 16 members of the Council), 30 Associates (including 2 members of the Council), 2 Licentiates, 1 Retired Fellow, and a large number of visitors.

The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 28 February 1927, having been published in the JOURNAL, were taken as read, confirmed and signed as correct.

The Hon. Secretary announced the decease of:

George Sydney Jones, elected Associate 1891, Fellow 1926.
George Sutherland, elected Associate 1894, Fellow 1923.
Percy Montagu Beesley, transferred to Licentiateship 1926.
Thomas George Williams, transferred to Licentiateship 1925.

And it was *Resolved* that the regrets of the Institute for their loss be entered on the Minutes, and that a message of sympathy and condolence be conveyed to their relatives.

The following members attending for the first time since their election or transfer were formally admitted by the President:

Mr. V. L. Nash [*A.*].
Mr. W. E. Woolley [*L.*].

The President announced that by a resolution of the Council the following had ceased to be members of the Royal Institute:

Fellow: Michael Francis Cavanagh.

Associates: George Edwin Downer, Robert Arthur Lee.

Licentiates: Alfred Norman Bembridge, Henley Dawson-Pearce, Walter Goldstraw, Douglas Pairman Hall, William Houlker, Charles James Newman, David Webster.

Mr. Howard Robertson [*F.*] having read a Paper on "Modern French Architecture," and illustrated it by lantern slides, a discussion ensued, and on the motion of Professor F. S. Granger, D.Litt. [*A.*], seconded by Mr. Fernand Billerey, a vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Howard Robertson by acclamation, and was briefly responded to.

The proceedings closed at 9.55 p.m.

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Arrangements have been made for the supply of the R.I.B.A. JOURNAL (post free) to members of the Allied Societies who are not members of the R.I.B.A. at a specially reduced subscription of 12*s.* a year. Those who wish to take advantage of this arrangement are requested to send their names to the Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, W.1.

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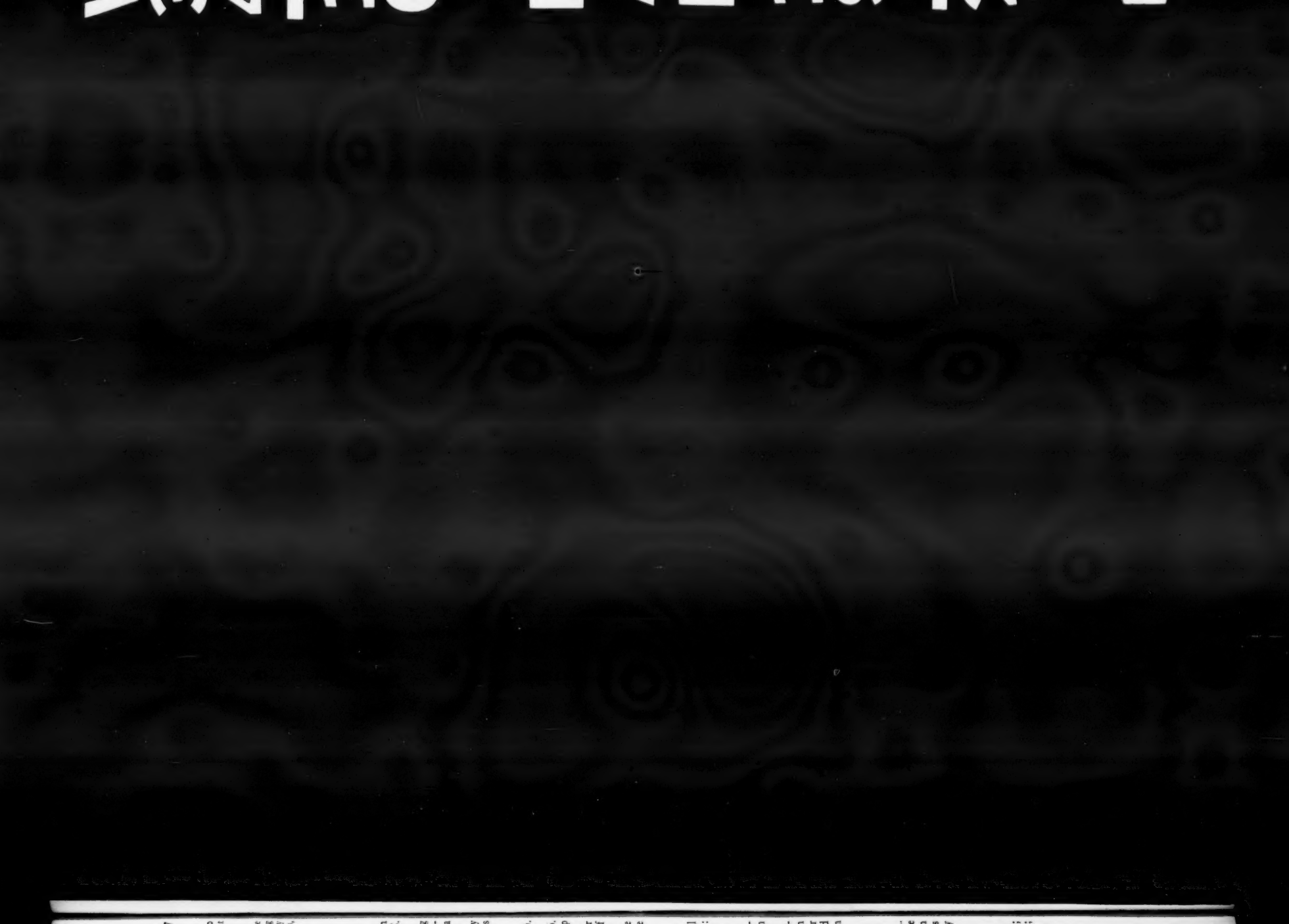
### R.I.B.A JOURNAL.

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